THE TIMES

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76th Year

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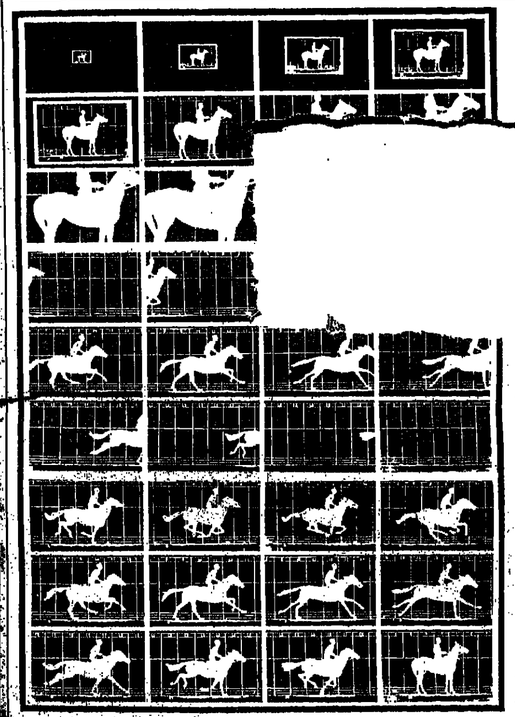

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# Culture and nullity

**By Philip Brockbank**

**PER GEDIN:**
**Literature in the Market Place**
211pp. Faber. £5.95.

A modern Ezekiel, prophesying in and upon a new Tyrus, would be allowed his television time, be paperbacked in the neighbourhood of *Letters from a Vampire* and invited to the more decorous publishing parties. The reflection is prompted by the apocalyptic furore of *Literature in the Market Place*, Per Gedin's account of literature up-for-sale, and by the experienced face gazing back over a half-empty glass from the other side of the dustjacket, from which it is hard to deduce whether Mr Gedin is a guest at the party or the host.

Mr Gedin would be a liberal optimist and believe in the marketplace if he could. "Economic progress", he says, "generates cultural development", and in late nineteenth-century Sweden the growth of the book market brought with it "a bourgeois literature which after years of stagnation replaced the academic literature of the past". Yet from his story of Sweden's more recent past it emerges that economic growth has precipitated steep cultural decline:

> The status of spiritual values has fallen so low that they are considered no longer worthwhile pursuing other than for those with a definite special interest. Schools and universities see as their main task the creation of educated citizens as quickly and efficiently as possible; citizens who can be utilized in the production of further material goods.

It seems that the catastrophe proclaimed in *The Dunciad*, at the beginning of the epoch of the mass-produced book, is upon us:

> Nor *public* Flame, nor *private*, dares to shine;
> Nor *human* Spark is left, nor Glimpse *divine*!
> Lo! thy dread Empire, CHAOS! is restored;
> Light dies before thy uncreating word:
> Thy hand, great Anarch! lets the curtain fall;
> And Universal Darkness buries All.

For Sweden's plight, as Mr Gedin argues, is not unrepresentative, and it is not hard to recognize that, as a thriving Western European welfare state with a 'mixed economy', Sweden has already achieved the condition of prosperous vacuity to which the rest of us apparently aspire. Three-litre nullity, it appears, prevails across the top of the social cube and 850cc nullity across the base, while social justice demands 1300cc nullity for all. But somewhere in the cube human sparks (Per Gedin being one) can still be heard crackling.

The ironies and contradictions attending both the condition and the diagnosis are formidable. Discriminating the chosen people from the Philistines, the Saints from the apocalyptic Beast, is not as easy as one's unfocused righteous indignation would like it to be. Certain titanic factories, for example, might be thought to issue from the several heads of the Beast in its Swedish manifestations. Harald Swedin tells us that "if mass culture, in the form of the weekly press, simple and uncomplicated film entertainment, and much else, is called the opium of the people, then we should acknowledge in the same breath that high culture functions as the *opium of the bourgeoisie*, an escape from social and political realities"; Torsten Ekbom asks (not expecting an answer), "Why is a Greek vase surrounded with almost religious reverence while a coca-cola bottle is thrown on the junk heap?" and, after long hard thought, Ulf Linde confesses that he is "not convinced that a society such as ours necessarily needs art. . . . If a minority considers that man cannot live without meaningful examples of it, does not necessarily follow that the society should encourage the production of meringue." In Per Gedin's pages, "is the cultural activity whose habitat is among the educated upper class, within the Bourgeoisie."

An initial reaction to rhetoric of this order is that none could indulge it who knew a little of the cultural history (high and low) of nineteenth-century Europe, who had read Dickens, Zola, Flaubert and Matthew Arnold. A second reaction might be that this is just the sort of talk that pedlars of *cheap wares in the market-place* want to hear—it invites us to settle for the third rate.

Giving sympathetic ear to the Beast, however, we must acknowledge that from its ignorant abyss it speaks half-truths. Much that is thought to be high culture does work as anodyne or anaesthesia; not all Greek vases are valued as Keats valued the Vase of Sosibius, and pop-bottles with glass marbles stuck in their throats now fetch as much in English antique shops as ancient urns once fetched in Athenian bazaars. For those like Professor Linde, who find no significant difference between art and meringue, or between Haydn and a sentimental Hollywood melody, it may reasonably be said that none exists: "If any man have an ear, let him hear." Like the anti-art movements of the 1920s (from which, it seems, Professor Linde's critical nihilism derives) even crass repudiations of literary values can be heard as cries of frustration and spiritual exasperation, like the voices of doubt in the nineteenth century. For there is a sense in which it is true that concerts, exhibitions, opera-houses and theatres serve, like race-courses, regattas, memorial services and conferences, as opportunities to put on our informal uniforms and declare our class solidarities. The insights of Veblen's *Theory of the Leisure Class* keep their validity, and much of Hannah Arendt's indictment of cultivated snobbery can take us back to Shakespeare's *Timon* or to Hogarth's "Time Smoking a Picture".

The Beast in Sweden, however, no longer needs to rage against the bourgeois Saints. Life has been made easy for him as he has been petted by the governors and mentors of the land, and lies curled up in the back of the Volvo. This is perhaps the most ominous of the signs to be deciphered from Per Gedin's tablets. The Swedish Social Democratic Party's Cultural Committee proclaimed in 1969 that it did not see "a lack of activity in the theatre, art, music, or exhibitions as a sufficient sign of so-called 'cultural impoverishment'". To describe people who are active in politics and trade unions, who fish, hunt and go berry-picking, with a high degree of unity and interaction, as 'culturally impoverished'", says the committee, is to be guilty of "a gross underestimation of the value of these people's lives." If we are good berry-picking union men (or even companionable killers on a grouse moor) all is well with us; our capacities for intellectual and imaginative growth are sufficiently realized.

For William Blake, writing at the other end of that long history of democratic emancipation of which Sweden may be the terminal point, the New Jerusalem was to bring a liberation *for* the creative imagination, not a liberation *from* it. Art is against Empire; and we need to be free of art if the Cultural Committee is to keep its authority over us. "I am really sorry", said Blake, "to see my Countrymen trouble themselves about Politics. If men were Wise, the most arbitrary Princes could not hurt them. If they are not wise, the Freest Government is compell'd to be a Tyranny.... Houses of Commons and Houses of Lords appear to me to be fools; they seem to me to be something Else besides Human Life."

Per Gedin does not revive the romantic battle-cries, however. He tries, largely by a scissors-and-paste technique which lets the cultural situation speak for itself, to see what has gone wrong and how. He looks again at the class structure of Swedish society and finds it much changed from what it was when the rival orthodoxies of socialism and economic liberalism were taking shape. With the help of Marcuse, David Riesman, Galbraith and others, he finds Sweden "a group society rather than a society of individuals", with people increasingly dependent upon social institutions which themselves move towards a condition (or state) of monolithic interdependence. In the mass and service society power is slipping away from capital and labour alike, towards knowledge and information, and management and unions find it increasingly convenient to work together towards "growth" and "higher standards of living" for all—all in the West, that is. The mass society which no longer takes its character from the historical conflict between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat may no longer have need of bourgeois values and bourgeois art. Nor of proletarian art and values either. For Gedin sketches the poignant history of the rise and fall of *Folket i Bild* (an equivalent of *Picture Post*), of the "Books for the People" movement, and of the Workers Educational Committee which hoped to "make cultural values available to all citizens". The time comes when Ragnar Edenman, Minister of Culture, confesses that

> Within the workers' movement we believed for a long time that increased welfare for the broad mass of people would automatically bring a growing cultural need and a rise in the level of culture. Today we are not so sure—one is rather more inclined to believe that no such connection exists. . . . What is worrying is that mass culture's products flood over us in such a steady deluge. People do not choose themselves what to consume in this field.

The pitiful word of course is "automatically", and upon it certain oracles of the right and the left converge; allow the market mechanisms to operate freely, says one voice, and human values will prevail; change the ownership of the means of production, says another, and the promised land will be ours.

Like the rest of us, Per Gedin is perplexed and tantalized by the elusive relationships that seem to form and unform between human, literary and economic "values" and the word "bourgeois" waits like a black hole at the centre of his universe of discourse. In the 1960s, he says, "publishers continued to publish books for a bourgeois reading public that had gradually disappeared", and "the bourgeois ideal of education", he writes on another page, "has receded further into the background for all social classes". The intelligent and informed reading public has never been co-extensive with the bourgeoisie, however, and many educational ideals, including some they set aside, have sought to oppose, not promote, the bourgeois complacencies. Indeed, as some of the more humane Marxists in Gedin's pages remark, much that masquerades as "progressive" educational reform is designed to satisfy the bourgeois demand for "relevance" and "utility". One of the necessary qualifying truths is acknowledged by Gedin in his discussion of Robert Escarpit's distinction between the cultivated circuit and the popular circuit, of which the first is said to be "actively interested in literature, frequently intellectual and educated but no longer limited to a particular class". One thinks of the "aliens" of *Culture and Anarchy*, drawn from all classes and owning their allegiance to none, educated in the literature of the past, aware of human continuities, trying to distinguish the real from the factitious needs of the present.

Yet what is true is not always true enough. While there is no fixed necessary relationship between class and culture, from which anything can "automatically" be expected to follow, there are multiple, complex relationships, unacknowledged by Arnold, that hardly ever cease to be a preoccupation of art itself. There is a route, traceable in Haydn's *Seven Last Words*, from Golgotha to the ballroom of Nicholas the Magnificent; another, by way of Velasquez, between the screaming popes of Francis Bacon and the court of Philip IV; and yet another, by way of Alexander Pope, from Horace's Rome to Gedin's Sweden.

None of those trucks can be casually followed as we strap our coracles on our backs or crawl round the gooseberry bushes in interludes between political meetings. Nor can they be more than signposted by the mass media. They require reflective, patient and sometimes arduous attention. For a civilization to flourish it must learn to be its age—some four thousand years at the present time; it must be capable of visiting itself from the past, seeing what its "culture" is allowing to grow, what it is letting die and what it is (often inadvertently) killing off.

Per Gedin sees that in the past fiction has had a contribution to make to the processes by which civilized consciousness renews itself, and he wonders, with reason, if it can still make it; is the novel dead, unnecessary or merely unmarketable? Where there is no imaginative sympathy, it might be said, there can be no true community, and it is through fictions that the imaginative sympathies are most fully excited and ordered. The novel at its best is the amplest and most leisured of such articulations, and in nineteenth-century Europe it did much to create a more generous sense of the possibilities of human community. In Russia, for example, as in England, political responses to economic circumstance have worked sometimes with, and sometimes against, the more complex recognitions of literary art. No political platforms could be directly built on the stories of Dickens or Lawrence, of Tolstoy, Chekhov or even Gorky; but no political wisdom could or can afford to ignore them. The contribution that Russian novelists *made to the transformation of Russian* community was, and potentially continues to be, immensely significant. In England, more obscurely and incrementally, an analogous re-creative process has been at work and might still be so.

Neither east nor west of Sweden can it be said that conditions are right for a fuller recovery of the creative functions of fiction. Per Gedin does not look at the East, but Khrushchev's distressed and distressing account of the treatment of Russian novelists in Stalin's time leaves one ready to believe that in our time, as in Milton's, art will find itself against empire as much after the revolution *as it was before*. "Our creative intelligentsia", says Khrushchev, talking of writers and artists, "suffers more than any other category of people in our society", yet their "works provide the inspiration without which man cannot live". "Creative work, especially by writers", he observes, "has a tendency to interfere in the political sphere because it is part of the artistic process to analyse relations among people, including relations between those in power on the one hand and common workers on the other." "Any ruling party, including the Communist Party", he adds, would like to have a monopoly of such analysis. Exactly so. And the *Swedish Cultural Committee* looks like the Eastern contribution to the mixed economy.

The Western contribution is the market. In recent years some very heady claims have continued to be made, in the teeth of the evidence, for the divine provenance of the market. Here, for instance, is F. A. Hayek, writing about the "marvel" of the price mechanism:

> I have deliberately used the word "marvel" to shock the reader out of the complacency with which we often take the working of this mechanism for granted. I am convinced that if it were the result of deliberate human design, and if the people guided by the price changes understood that their decisions have significance far beyond their immediate aim, this mechanism would have been acclaimed as one of the greatest triumphs of the human mind.

Hayek, writing in 1945 but re-published in 1975) tries to enlist the support of Whitehead and claims that what we do unconsciously when we make our market choices is to have an effective say in the comprehensive conduct of things. The price being the terminal sign of a complex evaluative process, we


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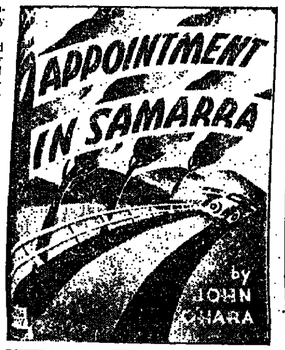
as individual buyers have no reason to distrust it and unconsciously acquiesce in its validity.

This is a fiction, getting and deserving no support whatever from Whitehead (who is concerned with the assimilation into unconscious behaviour patterns of responses which were once fully informed and conscious), and satisfying only to those who are disposed to believe it. And our dispositions are shaped by the way we *imagine* workers, middlemen and customers to behave. Hayek's claim is not necessarily true or false in any particular instance, but one need not be a total Marxist to see that the "price" is often no more than the residual symbol of a history of conflict, conspiracy, evasion, muddle, exploitation and greed, representing what the marketeer can get away with and what the buyer can put up with.

It is not surprising that Per Gedin's very detailed analysis of the costing of fiction over the past hundred years gives us no reason whatever to trust the market. In 1857 it was possible to make a reasonable profit from a printing of 1,000 of Trollope's *The Three Clerks* at a mark-up (i.e. ratio of price over production costs) of 5.8. In the 1970s a printing of 30,000 at a mark-up of 8 yielded a distinct net loss in Sweden on the second novel of a successful writer. The expensive advertising campaign together with high administrative costs apparently accounted for the loss. From one point of view, of course, the "loss" is peripheral, because the enterprise has in the end given employment, profit and pleasure to all concerned. But the system is so designed that loss registers on the day of judgment merely as loss. Per Gedin is well aware that the Marxist doctrine he quotes from Goldmann, that "a book or a film is primarily a product among other products", is cheerfully accepted by modern publishers who are dominated increasingly by their accountants and not by their book creators. The virulent cynicism of Swedish democracy has, it seems, imposed a 17 per cent VAT on all books (with some concessions to academic institutions), and it is likely that this will prove a more efficient method of silencing the artist than any other that bureaucracy has devised.

Those who are undismayed by the prospect of a society without art are wholly insensitive to what F. R. Leavis once called the "community from the inevitable everyday creativeness of the ordinary individual life to the creativeness of the artist". In literary art the vehicle of such creativeness is the language, and Per Gedin's observations about the teaching of



*Best sellers: items from the further ming sale of modern first editions at Sotheby's New York on October 25. Also included are first editions of Housman's Shropshire Lad and James Joyce's Ulysses, as well as a item of 43 letters from Ernest Hemingway to Malcolm Cowley (the "critic who best understands my work").*

Swedish literature and language in schools have a poignant aptness. "Compared with other countries", says one Swedish educator, "our upper-grades teaching seems to consist of the unstructured reading of modern literature, where the teacher makes no demands and has no great expectation of the students." It is from such beginnings that our sense of the full expressive potentials of our language can be lost, and if recent English theatre in the Pinter mode has any value, it is that it demonstrates the imminent failure of "everyday creativeness" in English life and language. Gedin several times acknowledges his debt to Q. D. Leavis's classic and still indispensable work, *Fiction and the Reading Public*. "The vocabulary of 'vision' and 'inspiration'", remarks Mrs Leavis, has become "the peculiar property of journalism, and salesmanship." Journalism and salesmanship have also appropriated many of the skills that once went into book production, leaving us with superb glossy fashion magazines but with "perfected" novels which disintegrate during the three-hour railtrip they are meant to beguile.

The indifference of the market to human and literary value, however, cannot be attributed to the market itself, but only to those who buy and sell there. In this sense, Blake's gloss on princes will serve for the Charing Cross Road: if the people are not wise, the freest government is compelled to be a tyranny. One of the more pernicious snares for civilization is woven by the many senses and uses of the words "response to demand". All "democratic" governments, of whatever confessed political colour, tend to pride themselves on their response to popular demand; proliferating doctrines of the "sovereign body" in the sub-masses of the great mass require that mandated "demands" should be fully met; television time is regulated to meet measured demand; and in all branches of commerce market research is busy determining demand and contriving its satisfaction. The more predictable and uncritical that demand is, the easier things are for manipulators and manipulated alike.

What Mr Gedin is concerned to keep up is a set of minority activities and responses that can rarely be formulated as "demands". The old phrase, "mass civilization and minority culture", will frequently come into his readers' minds, and will leave some ready to set aside his book as yet another rearguard defence of "elitism". But the few, recruited from the many, have often in the past had to confront the many, and the process, whether in the territories of religious experience, revolutionary politics or literary creation, will continue as long as civilization lasts. It does not therefore follow that the few despise the many—on the contrary, they may represent the awareness of the many in a heightened and more articulate form. And the few do not compose an indivisible elite. The mass-self, like the unregenerate Adam, may be said to be in all of us. But if the minority, and the reflective self, are to be heard, it is essential, to return to the most practical and urgent of Per Gedin's concerns, that books should be published in hundreds at reasonable prices and not merely in tens of thousands.

In England we still have much to be thankful for. Our books are still the cheapest in the Western world; many publishers still offer decently produced classics at acceptable prices, and novels—good and bad—continue to reach the market in comparatively small editions. Anyone who undertakes to do for this country, however, what Mr Gedin has done for his, will find many of the same portents, both in publishing and in education. In particular he will find a proliferation of cheaply produced little magazines with an ephemeral life and circulation. "The age of the village leagues, the political cells, the mimeograph, is here", as Birgitta Trotzig proclaims in Gedin's chapter "Closing the Books". But, as an interesting British immigrant writer said recently, "if you write for little mags you get a little mug mind".

In working to recover a public for the amplitude of the novel, one hopes to promote the centrality of the imagination in the pursuit of human values. Since they cannot be, and never have been, directly related to market values, we cannot allow our economists, or ourselves as economists, to determine them for us.

The grosser forms of political polemic against the arts and the humanities require us to recognize that without the productive and export capacities we cannot as a nation afford the luxury of high culture. But if the arts and humanities were flourishing they would be concerned (as Conrad and Dickens were) with what we are producing and exporting, where and why, to what end.

Not all forms of growth are healthy, and history brings its catastrophic declines as well as its progresses. The creation of value is a function of the imagination working upon human experience whether in the infants' schools or in the British Museum, and continues in both to depend upon our present sensitivities and on what has gone before in the imaginative history of civilization whether religious, political or aesthetic. If Arnold were writing now it would be not on culture and anarchy but on culture and nullity, finding our reading habits, our educational routines, our writing conventions and our scholarship conforming more and more uncritically to the dominion of dullness. But something yet may come of nothing; and Per Gedin squats resolutely upon the phoenix's egg.

The late Lucien Goldmann's *Towards a Sociology of the Novel* (181pp Tavistock Publications. Paperback £2.95) was originally published in France in 1964, under the title *Pour une sociologie du roman*. The French edition was the subject of a lead review in the *TLS* of July 14, 1966; while calling Goldmann's genetic method, "generical structuralism", with its attempt to synthesize "the most fruitful trends of both Marxism and psychoanalysis", the reviewer acknowledges that he "is a perceptive critic, and an important one".

The book consists of five essays, including "Introduction to the Problems of a Sociology of the Novel", "Introduction to a Structural Study of Malraux's Novels", and "The Nouveau Roman and Reality". The translation is by Alan Sheridan.

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# An avenger and her victims

**By J. I. M. Stewart**

DORIS LANGLEY MOORE: Ada, Countess of Lovelace
397pp. John Murray. £9.50.

In *The Late Lord Byron*, published in 1961, Doris Langley Moore drew a full-length portrait of Byron's wife, and declared that "it is painful to watch a young, attractive, and in many ways gifted woman allowing herself to be consumed with vindictiveness' passing itself off as righteousness". In the present book (which in effect has Lady Byron rather than her daughter Ada, Countess of Lovelace, as its centre of interest) she abundantly documents that conclusion—and is indeed constrained to broaden the indictment. Having quoted certain "touching outpourings" of bad poetry in which the forsaken wife, contemplating the house on the Durham coast where she had been married, exclaims

*That* eye is beholding the waters roll,
It seems to give them a living soul;
*That* arm by mine is trembingly pressed,
I cherish the dream—he *shall* be blest!

Mrs Moore asks:

> What reader . . . could suspect that she was concurrently writing a series of recriminations in which not one aspect of her husband's conduct or character was allowed to possess a scintilla of goodness, and letters of concentrated vindictiveness showing the pleasure she took in any report of his being hurt or humiliated, and reiterating her favourite theme, which was not the dream that he should be blessed but: "Depend upon it, the day is not very distant when he will justify me to all the world, by his undisguised atrocity!"

The peculiarly appalling thing about Byron's bride was that her "changeability in regard to persons amounted to a neurosis". She was hopelessly *contradisante* where her husband was concerned: "Condemnation of his wickedness, such as her admirers uttered, would give rise to the displays of magnanimity they marvelled at: anything said in his favour brought about effects precisely the reverse." Playing up to the solicitude of an unknown clerical correspondent, she wrote: "I believe the nature of Lord B's mind to be most benevolent"; to her familiar friends she would denounce him as a monstrous devotee of vices mentionable and unmentionable alike. These inconsistencies, which were temperamental and ineradicable, she learned to exploit in the interest of a wholly spurious spirituality. Her "knack of appearing to love the sinner even while abhorred by the sin" she eventually built up into "a perfect black comedy of self-delusion and self-righteousness". It seems unfortunate (although Mrs Moore does not explicitly make the point) that "in all the lives that were lived through that epoch of overwhelming documentation, there is none more fully documented than Lady Byron's".

Yet this very abundance means that such scattered virtues as Lady Byron owned—the secret against oblivion, and Mrs Moore records them with the vigilant impartiality that constitutes one of her abundant endowments as a biographer. In the earlier book we learn of a "captivating personality which from youth to old age exercised a powerful charm over all kinds of morally aspiring persons", and now she is exhibited as carefully fostering her daughter's gifts: as rejoicing in the domestic sanctities that seemed to be establishing themselves in the earlier years of that daughter's marriage; and as bringing a clear head and a purposive if domineering drive to the furthering of all sorts of progressive philanthropic enterprises flourishing in the period. Unlike Lady Lovelace, however, whose high intellectual endowment and mathematical ability brought her close to a pioneering position in the development of what are now called cybernetics and computerization, her scientific interests were distinctly on the dotty side, with phrenology and a moral disapproval of anaesthetics prominent among them. Nevertheless she may not unfairly be placed among those who firmly believe that rank and wealth are privileges carrying with them the duty of an active furthering of the public good. It is very difficult indeed not to detest Lady Byron. But Mrs Moore succeeds in presenting her at least as something short of a monster, and as

*Ada, Countess of Lovelace, aged about 27. This sketch, by A. E. Chalon, appears in Doris Langley Moore's biography reviewed on this page.*

belonging like the rest of us to nature's family.

Other persons prominent in the earlier book inevitably take up their roles again in this one, and few of them can be said to have improved in the interval. Lady Caroline Lamb, formerly "guileful, tenacious, and vindictive in no common degree", is posthumously recalled as "flagrant" and "noted in her family for ingenious lying". Augusta Leigh, in *The Late Lord Byron* "treacherous because she was complaisant rather than because she was cunning", is now described as "exceedingly perfidious to Byron", and although vindicated of any positive design to prostitute each of her daughters to the unspeakable Henry Trevanion, is shown as having downright silliness as the least tiresome of her disabilities. But the real runner-up to Lady Byron in the present volume is a newcomer: Augusta's daughter, Medora. Yet if any thoroughly vicious and wicked woman ever deserved some sympathy it is surely this unfortunate. Her life was a series of disasters, and over the more decisive of them she had no control. To be widely (but probably erroneously) supposed the offspring of an incestuous adultery was a heavy burden to bear at the dawn of the Victorian Age, as was having been seduced and got with child in her mid-teens. But the grand misfortune of this "remarkably amoral and callous girl" was to have engaged the deeply disingenuous compassion of Lady Byron, who entered her life as "more an avenging than a guardian angel". Lady Byron, who implicitly believed Medora the child of exceptionally awful sin, lost little time in detailing its character to the wretched child. In her own mind she had successfully cast the feeble Augusta in the role of prime agent in her own tragedy, and confronting in Medora one "through whom she had suffered and could now inflict suffering, was a heady experience". Medora on her part was not slow to see the advantage of dragging her mother's character down to the depths, and when authentic means to this ran out turned blithely to invention: Trevanion, she declared, had been her mother's lover before she in turn was prostituted to him.

Medora Leigh's story is the grimmest thing in Mrs Moore's book, and it moves her to a grim judgment:

> Medora never made the slightest effort to enter into the appalling social and financial predicament of that wretched woman [her mother], whom she had misled, lied to, and disgraced. When every allowance has been made for the squalor of an early seduction, the debased character of the man who had moulded hers, the tradition of feminine helplessness in which young people of her class were bred, there is something that repels sympathy in Medora's luck, even at twenty-four—the age she had now reached—of any realization that such freedom as she had snatched and insisted upon should not have been combined with parasitic dependence on those from whom she had ruthlessly broken away. She had taken her sister's husband, inflicted genuine shame on her exalted family—for the gossip was now beyond suppression—sponged on the pathetically small means of a parent to whose difficulties she had so lavishly contributed, and now she could feel pity for no one but herself.

This might almost be the voice of Samuel Johnson, pronouncing in the *Life of Savage* final judgment upon that most unnatural of women, the Countess of Macclesfield, but one may perhaps be a shade sorry for Medora without being accounted hopelessly soft.

We come now to Ada, Lady Byron's legacy from the poet, and another woman upon whom numerous misfortunes were visited. Of these her mother was the first, and there is surely something ominous in the fact that the infant is recorded as never having seen her deserted parent without beginning to cry: there can be no doubt that Lady Byron loved her child intensely, nor any that her love was of a fatally possessive and domineering sort. The second lay in the character of her husband, Lord King, later elevated in the peerage as Earl of Lovelace. It was a character wholly admirable in many regards. Lord King was a man of austere morals and liberal views—taking himself too seriously as a lord-lieutenant and grandee, but devoted to what he conceived to be the good of his children, and regarding with pride rather than resignation the fact that his wife was distinguished from every other aristocratic woman of his acquaintance by the possession of intellectual endowments and a dedication to their employment fit to secure her an authentic status among what Henry James was one day to term "the investigating classes". Unfortunately the Earl was as weak as he was worthy; he fell wholly

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within the control of his dreadful mother-in-law—whose dreadfulness he discovered a little too late, since his wife was dying by the time the penny dropped.

Ada laboured under other disabilities, the chief of them being the wild inconsistencies of her mother's attitude to her absent—and soon her deceased—father, whose portrait was kept behind a green curtain, and who was presented to her alike as a great poet and a mysterious sinner. Unlike her mother, she never herself aspired to poetry or even to a taste for it, though she dedicated herself to some sort of fame worthy of the daughter of a man who had dominated the imagination of Europe in his time. A certain irksome and even alarming notoriety attached to her as the daughter of this eminent figure. She came to shun a polite society in which these matters were made the subject of almost prurient curiosity—and which was also full of the rubbishing and malicious people whom Mrs Moore abundantly exhibits. The result of the impulse was noble in itself: "She longed with intensity to escape into the unsullied world of the numerical sciences." And this in a measure she contrived—understanding the great Charles Babbage's Difference Engine, achieving the publication of a learned paper on it, and realising that could his Analytical Engine be perfected (only electronics had to arrive first) an immense extension of human faculty would result.

Unfortunately this rather splendid woman's character disintegrated. Ironically, it seems to have been in part the consequence of her acceptance of current thought in clinical medicine. She was perhaps constitutionally delicate, and she had picked up from her mother the trick of believing herself in frequent need of medical attendance. But whereas Lady Byron flourished on leeches (she must have parted in her time with more blood than all great Neptune's ocean could have coped with) Lady Lovelace was persuaded that laudanum was never more sovereign than when accompanied with plenty of brandy. Under this regimen she became, intermittently at least, arrogant and *exaltée* and—being a great lady, after all—would communicate even with the eminent Professor Babbage as if he were a lackey.

And now there came into play one of the strangest facets of this strange age. Lord Lovelace was not exactly wealthy, and found the pleasurable occupation of "improving" one after another of his estates a shade taxing. But his mother-in-law and patroness Lady Byron was affluent, and his wife therefore a very considerable heiress. Meanwhile he controlled no fortune as she had, and judged herself generous and unexceptionable in allowing her £300 annually to play with. Ada fell into debt—and chiefly through the well-nigh unaccountable circumstance that she had taken to gambling heavily on the turf. Perhaps she judged the mathematics was going to help. The results were disastrous. She came within the power of disreputable members of the betting fraternity. Some of them were gentlemen. It was eventually to transpire, as the consequence of some dark confession of her own, that these distresses had been accompanied by an impairment—or perhaps near impairment—of her virtue.

Having broken down, this talented child of genius died in early middle age. Lady Byron arrived to see her daughter through her final agony, taking care that Ada should not eschew any spiritually salubrious suffering through a cowardly recourse to opiates rather than leeches and mesmerists.

Mrs Moore ends her book on a philosophic note:

> We have lived in a period that often seems to have little to commend it, and yet, in the matter of personal relationships, of spiritual honesty and corporeal well-being, we may, after this sad backward glance, find some cause of gladness in the changes time has brought us.

I hope that this valedictory tone need not be taken to imply that Mrs Moore is saying goodbye to Byron and his circle. She has made the ground her own, and has established upon it a claim to be among the most accomplished biographers of her time. There is one encouraging hint here. The Lovelace's elder son Byron, briefly Viscount Ockham, is perhaps the only thoroughly attractive character in the present book. Mrs Moore feels that "there is much more to be learned about this short, solitary and romantic existence".

# Restoration roles

**By C. V. Wedgwood**

**HESTER CHAPMAN:**
**Four Fine Gentlemen**
301pp. Constable. £6.50.

Hester Chapman, who completed this quartet of seventeenth-century portraits shortly before her death, found her true vocation as a biographer only after a promising start as a novelist. Without formal training, she took great care with her research and sought the best advice, but it was her insight and sensibility combined with a vivid and flexible style, which gave its special quality to her work. Her first biography, *Great Villiers*, a study of the second Duke of Buckingham, immediately proved her gift for biography. In her later work, in her studies of Lady Jane Grey and Edward VI, for instance, she was particularly successful in understanding the young and inexperienced placed in positions of responsibility and stress.

*Four Fine Gentlemen* covers the period from the Civil War to the accession of George I. The characters are Anthony Ashley Cooper, first Earl of Shaftesbury, Sir William Temple, Sir John Reresby and the first and only Duke of Shrewsbury. Of these the first alone is a figure of major significance in English history and he has within the last ten years been the subject of an authoritative biography by K. H. D. Haley. Hester Chapman wisely concentrated on his personal characteristics, his social charm, his courageous endurance of a humiliating and painful illness and his over-confidence which, she argues, was one cause of his ultimate defeat. He underestimated the political skill of Charles II which proved greater than his own.

Sir William Temple, diplomatist and architect of Anglo-Dutch friendship, is known to many readers for the delightful letters addressed to him by his future wife, Dorothy Osborne, during the long years of separation before this constant couple overcame the objections of both their families. Hester Chapman does full justice to Temple's wide interests, lively mind and constancy in the face of misfortune. Five children died in infancy, his promising eldest son committed suicide within days of being appointed Secretary of State for War, and his beloved wife predeceased him. But he had his peaceful house and garden at Moor Park.

Sir John Reresby, a lesser figure altogether, was a spleneted Yorkshireman given to duelling, whose lively memoirs are very good reading and a source of useful information on English politics and society between the Restoration and the Glorious Revolution.

The most interesting and enigmatic of the quartet is the Duke of Shrewsbury. Born in the year of the Restoration, and the king's first godchild after his return from exile, Shrewsbury was only eight when his mother's notorious liaison with the Duke of Buckingham caused the duel in which his father was killed. In 1688 Shrewsbury was one of the group of noblemen who secretly invited William of Orange to England. In the course of his life he held many important offices in spite of his over-sensitive nature, distrust of his own capacity, and distaste for politics. Escaping at length from the burdens he hated, he went abroad for several years, spent much time in Rome and Venice, sightseeing and collecting works of art, then returned to England with a noisy, eccentric Italian wife whose garrulous absurdity drew laughter even from sad Queen Anne and greatly amused George I. Shrewsbury treated her always with the exquisite courtesy which never failed him. "The politest man in England", wrote a Jacobite agent who had approached him unsuccessfully on behalf of the Old Pretender. Hester Chapman's excellent study is all too short. Shrewsbury should have been the subject of one of her full biographies if only she had lived to write it.



# The decent Tory voice

**By J. H. Plumb**

**The Works of Samuel Johnson**
Volume 10: Political Writings
Edited by Donald J. Greene
482pp. Yale University Press. £21.60.

This book has been long awaited—for pretty well a decade—for the collected edition of Johnson floundered on the rocks of penury: a fate one feels that may yet trouble many of the great scholarly editions—Boswell, Walpole, Franklin, Burney, etc—that the great university presses undertook in the heyday of their prosperity. Furthermore, technological developments in the reproduction of documents and pamphlets bring such elaborate and costly volumes into question, in spite of the fact that good editorship adds so much to the documentation. Although some scholarly splendours may have a dark and uncertain future, or dubious value, it remains delightful to possess them and use them. Donald Greene's volume of Johnson's political writings continues the highest standards that one has come to expect from an American scholar. And what is more remarkable is that his introduction, ten years old though it may be, survives remarkably well in spite of the very important and original work that has recently been done on the Toryism of the 1740s and 1750s and the ideology of the 1760s.

This is not surprising, for Donald Greene's book *The Politics of Samuel Johnson* (1960) was an important pioneer work in leading to a deeper understanding of Toryism in the middle decades of the eighteenth century. In politics as in life, Johnson is always trenchant and fascinating. He invariably stretches the mind, for his arguments are never weak and never easy to refute. And, as always, there are lapidary phrases, splendid turns of irony that at times is almost sardonic, a rich sense of human folly and hypocrisy and an even richer sense of human compassion. Few writers in the eighteenth century described so tersely and so poignantly the dreadful fate of the common soldier or sailor: they

> languished in tents and ships amidst damp and putrifaction; pale, torpid, spiritless and helpless: gasping and groaning, unpitied among men made obdurate by long continuance of hopeless misery; and were at last wheeled in pits or heaved into the ocean, without notice and without remembrance.

War for Samuel Johnson, good eighteenth-century Tory that he was, benefited mankind little, only the great men, the admirals, the generals, the contractors and financiers.

Big money and big government tended to extortion, to the injury and exploitation of the bulk of the people. At the heart of Johnson's Toryism were the peasant and craftsman—the decent, honest, independent folk, providing for themselves through their industry and linked with Christian morality and the traditions of social respect. To understand eighteenth-century Toryism—its great power and appeal—we must, as Donald Greene has stressed, forget completely what Toryism became in the nineteenth century.

Eighteenth-century Toryism is easier to understand if one recalls not the Conservatism and Toryism of nineteenth-century America, Toryism in eighteenth-century England was essentially populist. But for the rotten boroughs, the Tories would probably have won every election between 1722 and 1784. They dominated not only many counties but a considerable number of the big cities with large electorates and frequently won seats in the City of London itself.

My one quibble with Donald Greene is that he associates Toryism with the lesser gentry and the county constituencies. Important factors though these were, equally important as the small squires, the country parsons, the yeomen of few acres, were the urban craftsmen. Both yeomen and craftsmen were feeling themselves to be increasingly at the mercy of vast impersonal economic and social forces which they could not understand and which they feared—the National Debt, high taxes, the Bank, overseas expansion, vast navies and large armies, and the continuing erosion of guild legislation and the onward march of enclosure and industrialized farming.

Time and time again the political sentiment of the country was anti-Whig, anti-city, anti-war as it had been in 1713. Again, the Tories, as Dr Linda Colley has shown, were well organized between 1730 and 1760, with good parliamentary leadership, an excellent record of attendance, well-planned strategies and a party, too, that possessed very strong local bases. Yet the Tories failed to achieve anything like the power commensurate with their popular support.

It is easy to explain this away by the nature of the parliamentary franchise which, through the rotten boroughs, gave the Court and Treasury party not a majority but an extremely effective base of political power. Then again, the House of Lords—of exceptional importance in eighteenth-century politics, yet astonishingly ignored by most historians, including Namier—was almost totally Whig, and the Tories could enjoy no leverage there. But equally important, I believe, was the lack of Tory leadership from the ranks—no Andrew Jackson to fulminate about banks and executive powers. The Tory leadership was too close to Bolingbroke, who wished to manipulate Tory sentiment for use within the political structure.

There was a clear Tory call for the purification of Parliament but never for its reform, and yet only through electoral reform could the Tories ever hope to gain control of the political system. As the century progressed, therefore, the Tories began to lose the more radical and populist elements that were drawn to reform of all kinds. Probably the greatest opportunity, given a different type of leadership, would have come in the 1750s when the stigma of Jacobitism had been eradicated and the forces of radicalism had not confronted the issues of Wilkes and America which defined for them a new and increasingly separate identity. But that is speculation.

What is not is that Toryism was a powerful political force—more powerful without Parliament than within—the creed of a large body of men and women for whom the general social, financial and economic changes of the eighteenth century were deeply inimical. Being essentially outside the political system, a Tory was more keenly aware of the cant and hypocrisy in much of the self-justification of the Whigs. Cant and hypocrisy were subjects upon which the powerful mind of Samuel Johnson liked to operate, and he could be merciless to all of its faces whether of the left or the right. With unerring polemical skill in *Taxation No Tyranny* he exposed the central weakness of the American colonists' position. How could they prate about liberty when they kept so many human beings in slavery? Often, too often, his pamphlet has been dismissed as a piece of hack work written to justify his pension. It contains some of Johnson's most vigorous writing on politics.

Both in this book and his former monograph Donald Greene has put all eighteenth-century historians in his debt, for he has demonstrated that the eighteenth-century world of politics was more than management, more than an arcane conflict between the "ins" and the "outs". It was a world of bitter issues, inflamed passions, and strongly held principles, a world which embraced an astonishingly large segment of the nation and one which attracted the great majority of English writers and intellectuals.

# Voltairomania in England

**By H. T. Mason**

**THEODORE BESTERMAN (Editor):**
**Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century**
Volumes CXLV-CXLVII
André-Michel Rousseau: *L'Angleterre et Voltaire*
1,088pp. Banbury: The Voltaire Foundation. £47.50 the set.

In the year of his death, Theodore Besterman could have wished for no finer or more fitting contribution to his *Studies on Voltaire* than André-Michel Rousseau's monumental work. Himself the most eminent of contemporary English Voltaireans, Mr Besterman viewed this account of Voltaire and eighteenth-century England with particular enthusiasm, as his preface makes clear; as he himself says, we have here "un travail d'une ampleur presque dire définitif".

M Rousseau has built up his masterly form what he calls the English profile of Voltaire: first of the man, as glimpsed essentially through encounters, conversations and letters, then of the oeuvre, as received in England and commented upon by British readers (in his recognizes with regard from "the Quiet" "anglais" is the ambiguous accepted term for matters referring to the whole of Great Britain). Rightly he claims to be instigating a kind of Copernican revolution in adopting the foreigner's viewpoint of the *philosophe*; and he has good cause to hope that this is the first step towards "un véritable Voltaire européen".

The Voltaire that emerges is a writer who enjoyed enormous success in the England of his day. Marvellous paradox, he was the foremost of *English* dramatists in the eighteenth century. His triumph as a historian was even greater. Hardly a year went by from 1727 without some edition or other, in English as in French, of a historical work by Voltaire; in all a hundred editions were published. Though the *contes* and the philosophical writings were less well received (largely because in form and content they appeared irreverent in the English context), Voltaire achieved preeminence in one further domain—as a critic. Besides the literary stage, no living commentator of any stature stole to contest him, and only the example of Shakespeare to be set in opposition; his critical opinions and his own tragedies made him an indispensable figure in every discussion on drama in eighteenth-century Europe.

This English Voltairomania is well captured by M Rousseau, who builds up the picture with encyclopedic documentation. The famous and the forgotten commentators of Voltaire in this country all find their place in this comprehensive portrayal, and the author gives space within the general framework to detailed vignettes of the relationship between Voltaire and, for instance, Gibbon, Hume, Smollett, Goldsmith and, inevitably, Shakespeare. This mass of information (supplemented by an invaluable bibliography of English editions of Voltaire that far surpasses all previous ones) is handled with dexterity and interpreted judiciously.

The conclusions are curious, judged by present-day attitudes towards Voltaire. England barely noticed the *conteur* (except for *Candide*) and paid little heed to the chainlonging crusades for justice launched from Ferney. If Voltaire achieved so much on the English stage, he also laid a dead hand upon it, his tragedies, as M Rousseau puts it, being a clever but sterile hybrid of Racine and Shakespeare. Only in his historical writings did he change the face of English letters, helping to create modern historiography by his attention to the development of civilization and "mentalités".

*Family and Society* is a selection from the *Annales*, translated by Elborg Forster and Patricia M. Ranum and edited by Robert Forster and Orest Ranum (261pp. Johns Hopkins University Press. £10.35; paperback, £2.75). The contributors include Pierre Bourdieu and Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie; the articles treat various aspects of family life from the Roman empire to eighteenth-century Europe. They explore child-rearing, fertility, inheritance laws, dowries, pregnancies and births, and examine various kinship structures.




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# Full speed astern

## By Alan Ross

GEORGE MELLY:
**Rum, Bum and Concertina**
182pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £4.95.

George Melly is a writer of parts, both public and private. In *Owning Up* he described, with customary relish, his sexual encounters on the road as a jazz singer with Mick Mulligan, encounters, as far as I can remember (and as far he was usually able to remember himself), mostly heterosexual; in the present volume, recalling his adventures on the lower deck at the very end of the war, they are almost exclusively homosexual. He has a nice line in throwaway nostalgia: "On the night in question I had fallen asleep up a very pleasant boy in the RAF." Often there is so much hangover, vomit and passing out involved that by daylight no one, least of all Ordinary Seaman Melly, is quite clear about what has taken place. "Next day we awoke with splitting headaches and mouths like Turkish wrestlers' jock straps" is a fairly standard start to a morning-after paragraph.

Mr Melly, unless his book is taken to be semi-fictional, seems to have enviable recall. Long philosophical discussions on the mess deck, drinking sessions in pubs with Wykehamist, Etonian, Borstal and psychopathic cronies, endless pick-ups from the rough to the ruined, lengthy arguments about surrealism and anarchy, are described thirty years later in meticulous dialogue. Does he really remember it all so accurately or is most of it invented? The exhibitionist, show-off side of Melly, the compulsion to be noticed at all costs, is so strong that one often gets the feeling he is simply improvising, that the buffoon and the performer have taken over in the interests of a good story.

It is not that important, for in *Rum, Bum and Concertina* he has written an engaging, innuendo entertaining account of a decidedly unusual matelot's education. "A gay rabbit" a Danish whore once called him in all innocence, and a fellow sailor shrewdly categorized him as "arse-bandit" masquerading as brown-hatter. For those to whom these distinctions are unclear Mr Melly has much useful information. In his mixture of vulnerable curiosity, unsophisticated intensity and sudden scuttle, he is certainly rabbit-like.

Having preceded Mr Melly by three years or so to various of the shore establishments he describes—notably HMS Royal Arthur at Skegness and Chatham Barracks (where within twelve hours my hammock was stolen and my "taxi" case lifted by the gang of thieving scoundrels who slunk our the war there)—I can vouch for his accounts of these often horrifying institutions. At Skegness on arrival I remember the duty officer bawling out that the streets of the town were so full of used French letters that it seemed they must be falling from the trees, but the ensuing VD film, combined with lavish doses of bromide in the tea, made all idea of sex with strangers remote and terrifying. Melly, in his eighteen-year-old infancy, eager and feminine, seems always to have found willing messmates, kindly old gentlemen or accommodating military. I think he overdoes the general accessibility: mess-deck conversation may have suggested that everyone had his "winger" and that not a day passed without an act of mutual masturbation or buggery, but I cannot recall in five years at sea being aware of even a single instance of either.

It was galling for Melly, who had set his heart on the Navy because of the sexiness of bell-bottoms, to find himself fitted out in hideous clerk's fore-and-aft rig, wearing collar and tie and ill-fitting porter's suit. He had earlier outraged an interviewing admiral in Cambridge by turning up in plum-coloured corduroys and pink shirt and giving as reason for his desire to be a sailor the "amusingness" of the uniform. Predictably, he was not recommended for a commission; but by failing to pass any of his courses at HMS Duke, near Malvern, or HMS Demetrius outside Leeds, both places where clerks, cooks and stewards were trained, he was returned to Skegness: "In my bell-bottoms I felt reborn."

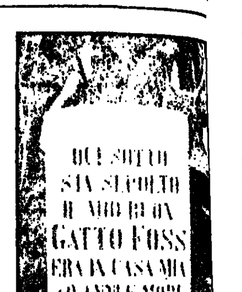
From this period on Melly's war alternated between "losing" himself for months at a time in barracks—a curiously easy thing to do—and enjoying himself on leave in London. His accounts of these excursions, usually to Soho or Chelsea, are as good in their way as Maclaren-Ross's descriptions of many of the same people and places in his *Memoirs of the Forties*. In Melly's case the cast is slightly queerer, less military and less vagrant: E. L. T. Mesens, his mentor in surrealism and subsequent employer in the art world, whose wife educated Melly in the pleasures of a woman's body; Quentin Crisp; David Webster, by now administrator of Covent Garden and an old friend from Liverpool days; Simon Watson-Taylor, secretary of the Surrealist Group, among others.

There is never malice in Melly's accounts of even the most outrageous activities. He comes over as simple in his passions, honest in his enthusiasms, unaffected in his cultural pretensions. He makes a bit too much of his homosexuality, carefully relating it to his upbringing in a comfortably off Liverpool family, his theatre-loving mother's preference for homosexuals, the loathed prep school master who beat him for preferring ballet to rugger, his time at Stowe, which he left "a convinced homosexual, believing and accepting that I would always remain one". He seems to have been lucky in his tolerant, woolbrokING, beer-drinking father who, when George was demobbed, coughed up £900 to buy him into Mesens's gallery and even took to making colleges himself. On all aspects of his own character Melly is without camouflage or sententiousness. As a consequence, his charting of the rise and decline (comparatively speaking) of a homosexual offers genuine insights into a process usually more glibly and pompously analysed.

But if homosexuality is the main current running through these memoirs, they succeed quite admirably in their other concerns: the hilarious and in some respects extremely acute depiction of lower-deck life, both on shore and at sea—for at last, when the war was over, Melly got a ship that actually left the quayside; and the re-creation of the wartime London of an idealistic, rather naive, sailor on leave, his head spinning with avant-garde art and literature, his girded for the night's mêlées.

Melly's is not recognizably the Navy of the men who went on convoys and fought battles, but the aro often the same people in different, less glamorous, situations. The anti-hero as anarchist, perhaps, the rating as clown; the literary and social snob as comedian—his equally the victim as survivor, his eyes on horizons infinitely enlarging, his affections genuine. Ordinary Seaman Melly, taking leave of the Navy at the age of twenty-one, was a cool cat who kept his distance and his options open. He knew what charm was for and how to use it. It's only a pity that the clarity and grace of his prose is disfigured by so many misspellings and misprints. He's lucky Warrant Officer Perkins isn't still around.

*Edward Lear's portrait of his beloved cat Foss, whom he acquired soon after settling in San Remo in 1871, drawn in a letter to Hallam Tennyson dated June 16, 1884. In 1887 Foss died, and Lear erected a memorial to him (right) in the garden of the Villa Tennyson: Foss was in reality not more than seventeen years old. From John Lehmann's lively and perceptive* Edward Lear and His World *(128pp. Thames and Hudson. £3.95); for further news of Lear, see* *page 1199.*






# From downstairs to upstairs

## By Denis Cannan

ANTHONY MASTERS:
**Rosa Lewis**
An Exceptional Edwardian
210pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £5.95.

Rosa was born 110 years ago. (I call her Rosa, not from that biographer's presumption—"Charles rose early on the fateful day"—which makes the reader feel that the writer actually hob-nobbed with Dickens or Baudelaire or a king; but because that was what we called her to her face.) She went into service as a maid-of-all-work at twelve years old, and found consolation in that hard and lonely life by avid reading of popular novels. Through the influence of an uncle she obtained at sixteen the job of under-kitchen-maid at Sheen House, Mortlake, the residence of the exiled Comte de Paris. This was a leap up from her previous employment at 3 Myrtle Villas. She was quickly promoted, learnt culinary French, and was able to observe the manners and tastes of the sort of people who were to use her for the rest of her life as a nanny, a mother and a bawd. It was here that she first met the Prince of Wales.

Any attempt to record Rosa's life is complicated by misperceptions that was largely of her own making. Anthony Masters, the author of this biography, has scrupulously excluded material that cannot be verified. This makes his a less amusing book than Michael Harrison's biography of 1962, and compels him to pad with a lot of trite and tiresome historical generalizations. He leaves out many of the best stories collected by Mr Harrison—perhaps out of a justifiable fear that he might be thought to have cribbed the other man's book without doing much work himself. Here is his account of Rosa's first meeting with Tum-tum:

> Rosa first met Edward at a dinner party during the course of which she was called from the kitchen to sing "God Bless the Prince of Wales" in the absence of a pianist. Rosa obliged the drunken company, was confused by the Prince of Wales for the cook, and later given a sovereign from a purse he apparently kept specifically for these occasions.

In Mr Harrison's version, which he got many years later from Rosa herself, the incident has become the opening of a fairytale. In the absence of the chef at Sheen House, Rosa had to cook the dinner. The Prince was so pleased with his plain broad beans, plain boiled truffles and plain boiled pear that he called for the cook. Rosa quickly mopped her face with a flannel and hurried to the dining room:

> "You should have seen their faces . . . they couldn't believe their eyes. . . .
> 'So it was you who cooked us that fine dinner, eh? . . . I do congratulate you—and here's my hand on it. . . . Here's something to show you how much we liked your dinner.' And he pulled out a little gold sovereign-case, and pressed a sovereign out and gave it to me. 'Here you are,' he said, 'a present sovereign from your future Sovereign.' He liked his little joke, did the King."

At Sheen House Rosa saw her chance in life and grabbed it.

> "I learnt to think there that it was not a stupid thing to cook. I saw that the aristocracy took an interest in it, and that you came under the notice of someone that really mattered. . . . I picked up what I could there—I taught myself. I worked every spare moment—I helped everybody else, and by helping everybody else I helped myself, because I picked the brains of other people, and what they had got I soon got, so between the two I made a wonderful success."

Success came when she astutely exploited her popularity as a cook by setting up a catering business, serving the aristocracy, the more acceptable parvenus, and even state occasions. But her notoriety began when she allowed herself to be exploited by her clientele for the indulgence of other appetites.

It was a shady business, involving her arranged and unconsummated marriage to a drunken butler called Excelsior Lewis, and their tenancy of a boarding-house in Eaton Place. A fixer from the court attended the wedding, and the boarding-house had a private entrance through the back garden. Mr Masters offers no new material here, and we are left to accept some harsh facts that always rather marred the fairytale: both the marriage and the boarding-house were arranged by the Dirty Tricks department at the Palace to provide a convenient and outwardly respectable hideaway for the dalliance of the prince and his friends. Rosa's long tenure of the Cavendish Hotel was to continue that service for a wider circle. The *OED* definition of dalliance well describes what attracted her guests: "Talk, confabulation, chat. Sport, play; *esp.* amorous or wanton toying. Trifling; playing with a matter. Idle, delay."

> Idle, delay. . . . I never pass down Jermyn Street now without missing a shabby entrance, a white dog on the doorstep, and a preliminary glimpse through dusty glass of Rosa brooding at the head of the big table with its flotsam of unclaimed letters and the farcical register full of famous names and false ones and a remarkable number of bedfellows called Mr and Mrs Squiggle. But nostalgia is dispelled by rage as one looks at the thing they put up and called the Cavendish when they pulled the Cavendish down. Trust Houses Forte's Sub Rosa Bar is bad enough. It is their Ribblesdale Restaurant that gives offence.

Sargent's portrait in the Tate *must* be a good likeness. If Lord Ribblesdale did not look like that, he should have. It shows him as perfectly cast in the fairytale—which now resumes its tinkling course after the nasty bit at Eaton Place. Rosa said that she loved him for twenty years, and there is pleasure in believing her for once. The cockney sparrow winning the heart of the arrogant, irascible Master of the Queen's Buckhounds—"ce grand diable de Milord Anglais"—who was also a painter and a great baby and a model for Higgins in Shaw's *Pygmalion* . . . one wants to believe in their long and tender friendship, and one finds with relief that no new dirt has been dug up to soil it. The bereaved and aging monster still seeks out Rosa years after anything more intimate was over, just for the solace of small talk and going to the theatre and shopping and pottering about. That is why one hates the suggestive nudge of the Ribblesdale Restaurant.

Mr Masters carries us no further than past memoirs and gossip in the area where we would like to know more. It was always coyly taken for granted that Rosa had been the prince's mistress. (Observing that unspectacular bosom, under an often grubby dressing-gown, one could not help the thought: Tum-tum slept here.) But, when, where, how often—and with what satisfaction to the prince? The prince's reputation as a great lover has recently taken a few knocks; and there was always something in Rosa's character—her voyeurism, and a disagreeable coarseness in the way she referred to sex—that made some people suspect that she lived on a reputation for sensuality that was not wholly justified. It is not always love of men that makes Madam a Madame. Rosa got into trouble in old age for trying to procure the female assistants as they left Fortnum and Mason's across the street. (The hot water took so long to reach the bathrooms of the Cavendish that I often wondered if she procured that too by tapping the supply at the same source.)

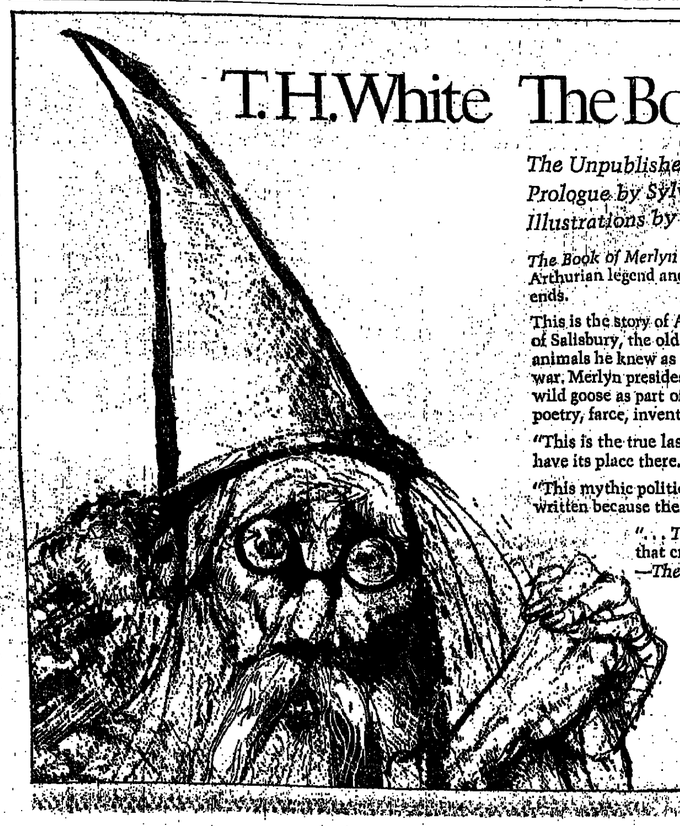
Her talent, perhaps, was more for the motherly love and irresistible companionship that she could give to anyone from her most celebrated patron to the gawkiest and poorest subaltern. (The Cavendish was the only place I have ever stayed in where one examined one's bill for omissions, rather than accretions.) Rosa may have "obliged" sexually; but perhaps she gave a more enduring satisfaction by exhibiting herself for the rest of her life as a relic of sexual scandal. That was the real lure of the Cavendish Hotel. For all its other attractions and charms, the real thrill in that lubricious mausoleum was to see, and show your friends, the Nanny who had been in bed with Daddy.

Mr Masters dwells on the seediness of the Cavendish in later years and the sadder frailties of the clientele. He quotes Aldous Huxley's sour comment: "It was like staying in a run-down country house—large comfortable rooms, but everything shabby and a bit dirty. We were not blindfolded, so we must have been a disappointment to Rosa Lewis. However, she put up with us." But Rosa had loathed writers since "that little swine Evelyn Waugh" had used the worst of her for Lottie in *Vile Bodies*, and this may have coloured the Huxleys' visit.

The closing words of this book make amends to those of us who loved the place, and for whom London has never been the same without it:

> It provided respite to the war-scarred, comfort to the lonely, discretion to the devious, and frivolity to the frivolous. Like its owner, it was unique. But unlike its owner it had an identity that was entirely genuine. It was only for Rosa that identity was in question.

I remember once having lunch in the Cavendish at a table next to Rosa's. Edith Jeffrey, who ran the place until the owner pulled it down, was trying to persuade her to eat a boiled egg. "I don't want the bloody egg!" squawked Rosa, and she flung it across the room. You couldn't have seen Conrad Hilton behaving like that at the Hilton.

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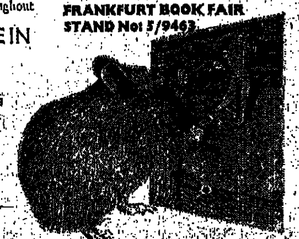

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# The landmarks of decline

## By Patrick Leigh Fermor

EDMUND KEELEY:
Cavafy's Alexandria
Study of a Myth in Progress
208pp. Hogarth Press. £7.95.

The Alexandria of the Ptolemies, Seleucid Antioch, Commagene, Sidon, Cappadocia, Osroene, the declining Greek world that sprang up in Alexander's footprints, the shifts of doomed Byzantium, the arguments on prosody and particles of grammar while the Eastern hordes are fidgeting offstage—all this, on a preliminary ruffle through *Cavafy's Alexandria*, is far enough from the Greece of school studies for the reader to feel flattered at the author's implied assumption, however ill-founded, that his knowledge is shared. Respect for Edmund Keeley's previous work and his translations with Philip Sherard deepen the pleasure. But, settling down to it in earnest, he is suddenly bewildered and dashed: "Candles", writes Mr Keeley, of an early poem (not one of his best), "does reveal the poet's attempt to move beyond simple nature imagery into a metaphysical landscape that is more alive and subtle":

Days to come stand in front of us
like a row of burning candles—
golden, warm and vivid candles
Days past fall behind us, a gloomy
line of burnt-out candles;
The nearest are still smoking,
cold, melted, and bent.
I don't want to look at them, their
shape saddens me,
and it saddens me to remember
their original light.
I look ahead at my burning candles.
I don't want to turn, don't want to
see, terrified,
how quickly that dark line gets
longer,
how quickly one more dead candle
joins another.

"The central image here", he continues, "is obviously uncomplicated: the persona's future days are compared to a row of lighted candles and his past to a row of burnt-out candles, the latter a sight he finds too terrifying to confront. The simile calls, perhaps, for more suspension of disbelief than the sentiment it serves to evoke really merits, but. . . " As the lines mount up, the reader's purring dies away: obviously, Mr Keeley thinks he's a blockhead; slow in the uptake at best. I found myself re-reading these passages very slowly, for fear of missing a point, and, if I have, perhaps there are faults on both sides. The author explains the poet with the hushed respect of a family doctor, and his bedside manner sometimes has the effect of a temple being walled in with opaque explanatory bricks. This single but recurring blemish is the more surprising by its contrast with the clarity of the translations—his own—which shine in quotation from every other page.

Apart from this puzzling foible, all is gain. Nobody is better equipped than the author for developing the spiritual and physical worlds of Cavafy (for which Alexandria is both the reality and the symbol) and for unravelling the historical and geographic background of the poems. He conducts us first through the seedy modern township itself. Arab at last, it is only remotely akin to the blacked-out, jolly, rather wicked wartime port, scented with kebabs and drains and jasmine and soon to be doubled by *Justine*'s fantastic metropolis, which many of us remember. Closer in spirit to the Egypt of the Lagids than to Nasser's, it was still not very different from Cavafy's Judaeo-Hellenic Franco-Levantine city: a cosmopolitan, decadent, and marvellous hybrid, old in sin, steeped in history, swarmed with intrigue, stuffed with cotton, flashing with cash, strident with cries for backsheesh, restless with conjuring tricks and, after sunset, murmurous with improper and complicated suggestions. The place is a palimpsest in reverse, where the earlier centuries are the clearest and by far the most interesting; and, by dividing it up into the literal city and the metaphoric, the sensual and the mythical, Mr Keeley traces the poet's relationship with all of them and demonstrates in detail Cavafy's spiritual immersion in the entire Hellenistic past.

How closely his attitude to beauty and letters and hedonism—and especially to erotic matters—tallied with theirs! The company of the Jugglers and the Morsels of the Rue Roscrie, with their slim wrists and their wide Fayoum eyes, and his random café encounters in the Attarine quarter, were touched and transposed for him by all the charm of similar unions beside the Nile or the Orontes twenty centuries before. Written with less skill, depicting, as some of them do, the homosexual equivalent of a *vieux marcheur* brooding over former embraces—pale brows of yesteryear, transports in hired rooms (though not the blue-chinned waterfront ambience of rough stuff, the dirty singlets, onions and crabs so deftly captured in Mr Hockney's drawings)—these particular poems might have ended in absurdity. A lesser hand could have turned his ancient world into Jean Boucchère's Illustrations for Pierre Louys, with a dash of Art Déco and Lalique thrown in; it could have evoked waxwork Alma Tadema arrangements of goblets and petals and tired ephebes wilting along the marble; or, at its unluckiest, those tinted postcards of wrecked Taormina striplings taken at the turn of the century by a German baron and sought after still.

The merrical languors of Canopic youth, the lament in Antioch for spoilt and gifted favourites laid low by excess, Iasys dead and *defutatus* ere his prime—all this is beset with literary peril. Votaries bent only on this facet of the Cavafy polyhedron might have reduced his poems to sodality passwords and the literature of a clique.

How does he escape? "Because he is a poet of the highest order?" This is true but unhelpful, suggesting, as it might, the masking of heterodoxy in elaborate stylistic cocoons—indeed, from the last paragraph, one might assume a wild proliferation of ornament. In a very complicated way it is the exact reverse. Auden wrote that no other poet used language more simply than Cavafy. It may appear so in translation, but the original, which perplexed his Greek contemporaries, is a unique and cunning alloy in which the fragments of legal diction and ancient Greek and inscriptions and tombs and old chronicles—one can almost hear the parchment creak and the flutter of papyrus—are closely haunted by the *Anthology* and the Sepuagint; it is contained in a medium demotic inversively stiffened with mandarin and beaten at last into an instrument of expression which is austere and frugal in the extreme. (E. M. Forster thought that Cavafy's literary ancestor, if he had one, might have been his fellow citizen Callimachus; but he is much closer to Simonides, to the terseness even of the Lacedaemonians, whom—writing under the guise of an Alexandrian in 200 BC—he affected to scorn.)

Against the rigorous background of this verse, his occasional use of repetition has a great cumulative force, and explicit emotion unfolds with the suddenness of a blossoming walking-stick; but, generally speaking, the scarce elaboration and adornment are always relevant and it is usually from the gaps between the words that the pomps and the garlands form in the air. Perhaps his singularity is best hit off by the attitude Forster used to detect when he ran into him between his office and his flat in the Rue Lepsius: "a Greek gentleman in a straw hat, standing absolutely motionless at a slight angle to the universe".

A book like this should instruct, touch off new trains of thought, promote fruitful discord and, above all, send the reader back to the original. Mr Keeley does all this, and, as the spell of the original returns, a familiar and interlocking question takes shape as well: why, almost alone among Greeks, has Cavafy won his large following abroad? His verbal felicities, after all, and the strange fabric of his language evaporate perforce in translation; only the bare thoughts remain; and as it is chiefly through English that he has reached the Gentiles, these versions are very important.

There is never any doubt about meaning: it is a problem of our more than scholarship. "The clear prose orth which Constantine Trypanis 'appends to the 'poems' in the *Penguin Book of Modern Greek Verse* will be a blessing for me. Of the metrical translations, all are good in their different ways. Naturally, there is plenty of metaphrase—dodging the ski-tracks forerunners, that is; and each has its drawbacks. It is hard not to enjoy the versions of the poet's friends George Valassopoulos, all the more so as Cavafy, who spoke excellent English, must have vetted them. The late John Mavrogordato has a strong whiff of the same sea, though some terseness vanishes in his rigid following of the original metres and rhyme-schemes. The latter ones are more free. Rae Dalven's otherwise excellent jurs cur and e with an almost non-existent word for "unlawful"—"the so desired sensuous delight", "the devil's desire of the flesh", "the beauty of deviate attraction". More disturbingly, her notes speak of the absence of a Byzantine empire in 1347, "from Istanbul". (Cavafy would have turned in his grave: she has literally jumped the gun by 106 years—the gigantic siege piece, that is, which Mehmet cast in Adrianople and lugged across Thrace to blow a hole in the Theodosian Walls for the Turks to pour through howling.)

Several problems plague the translator. Herakles triumphed over Hercules long ago; rightly; but the tendency of some translators to transliterate time-honoured Greek names into demotic forms—in the hopes of freshness, no doubt—must pucker many brows. Describing a young prince as "almost a Seleucid" will give long enough pause to a non-modern Greek-speaker for early Charlie Chaplin films to spring more nimbly into the void than the royal line of the Seleucids; and if this young Seleucid is made to reign over a Cappadocia spelt in the traditional way, the gap between poet and reader grows wider still. After all, Anglo-Greek proper-name forms, already familiar in Charles Lefebvre's learned discourse in *The Nun's Priest's Tale*, have been a blood-stream of English blood for thirty or forty generations; and Seleucids are as worrying as Antiochus and Firenze in the mouths of returned holiday-makers and the capital of Hungary made to rhyme with "cumshed".

Vexatiously for Anglo-Saxon translators, Greek—and even Cavafy's spare diction—has more syllables than English. His interpreters very properly stick to his thrift and often the English words are like small peas in a rather large pod; the line is over too quickly. There is no way out of this trouble, and it leads to a trap which augments it. Bent on demonstrating that Cavafy is a demotic poet, translators overdo the short forms of verbs—"I'll", "you've", "he's", "she'll", "we've"—and this tends on the accelerator when a touch of the brake would have helped. Worse still, it sets a tone which is too affable and too breezy. With notable exceptions, Cavafy's *persona* personal is ruminative and solemn. Better by far to sin through formality. The most dangerous are the poems where his speech is genuinely informal. Disguised as goodwill, these equivalents in slang rush into transitory minds, lie crepant by their very nature in time and place and association, field, these dread sounds are as windfalls at all but grenades with the pins out, to be flung back before they can blow up the poems they land in.

The best of his modern translators are Kimon Friar, who manoeuvres deftly through hazards of pace and vocabulary, and the expert team of Mr Keeley himself and Philip Sherard. It is precisely the dark forces haunting the border between idiomatic and colloquial which are leagued against their daring partners; and if their sallies across it have left scars, their own surgery has effaced the most serious. In an earlier *Selected Verse*, a Byzantine noble, curious his failure to change sides when John VI Cantacuzene seized power, blamed it on "bonus information and "phoney talk". There was no slang in the original and he injected "ruckless" surrounded "bogus" (for this reader) with visions from *Vile Bodies*, while "phoney" impinged, through a mashed cigar, and to describe the vain display of the Alexandrian kings as "show-bushness" seemed equally out of key. In their recent complete edition, however, these have all been set right. But others linger.

(And suddenly, setting all this nit-picking to rout—it is really an appeal for some more changes in the final canon—here comes Ezra Pound, bloodshot and furious, with a harem of disinvolved Muses waving Sophocles's *Woman of Trachis* and rasping, hissing and spitting out his own translation like a lunatic and monomaniac sheriff:

What's that screwball? Jus'lis'en a bit... slug, grunt and groan... I let out a shriek and WHIZZ!... [*fifes, kettledrums, oboes*]... Act a mo', Ma'am. Let's put him to bed on the Q.T. THUNDER of God! By the black vale of Oeta, don't weasel to me... HELL! a full of good talkers... Some local choke? Blast it!... "Tune up, you there"... [*flutes, clarinets, grosse caisse*]

Ezaky! Thazza good start. C'est très beau. Give! [*low 'cellos, contrabassi, muffled drums in gaps between the phrases...*]

Amazingly, it works; and leaves my case seriously battered. Best to chuck it, and move on.)

The bare thoughts, then, remain. "When it was a matter of wonder", records Landor, "how Keats, who was ignorant of Greek, could have written his *Hyperion*, Shelley, whom envy never touched, gave as a reason 'Because he was a Greek'." Of course this applies *a fortiori* to Cavafy, but it is not the truism it might seem to be. The leaf-fringed Flaxman-Lempriere world of Keats—the Titans, Saturn, the still citadels poised above the nymphs and the harvesters and lengthening shadows—"I'll", "you've", "he's", "she'll", "we've"—and this trouble on the accelerator when a touch of the brake would have helped. Worse still, it sets a tone which is too affable and too breezy. With notable exceptions, Cavafy's *persona* personal is ruminative and solemn. Better by far to sin through formality. The most dangerous are the poems where his speech is genuinely informal. Disguised as goodwill, these equivalents in slang rush into transitory minds, lie crepant by their very nature in time and place and association, field, these dread sounds are as windfalls at all but grenades with the pins out, to be flung back before they can blow up the poems they land in.

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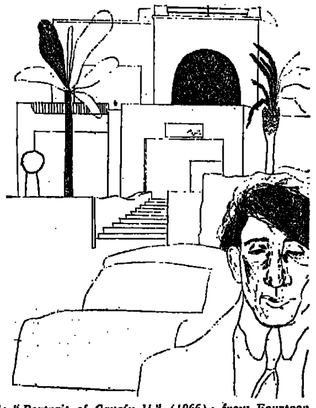

*Hockney's "Portrait of Cavafy II" (1966): from* Fourteen Poems by C. P. Cavafy, *chosen and illustrated with twelve etchings by David Hockney, translated by Nikos Stangos and Stephen Spender, and published by Editions Electa at £250. Illustration copyright Petersburg Press.*

Perhaps a prescient appositeness to the flux and erosion of modern times may be one of the hidden reasons for his influence.

Not Chaeronia, then, at all, but Cynoscephalae and Magnesia and Pydna, the fields where the Hellenistic kingdoms were destroyed by the Romans, and above all, the internecine feuds of the Epigoni themselves, were the defeats which seemed fatal. Here is the end of Demetrius Poliorcetes, the brilliant hero of a score of pitched battles and famous sieges:

When the Macedonians deserted
him
and showed they preferred Pyrrhos,
noble King Dimitrios didn't behave
—so it is said—
at all like a king.
He took off his golden robes,
threw away his purple buskins,
and quickly dressing himself
in simple clothes, he slipped out—
just like an actor who,
the play over,
changes his costume and goes away.

Admirably conveyed by Keeley and Sherard, this is the true Cavafy note. This is his atmosphere, and it follows him past all the landmarks of decline; until the Romans themselves, half in awe of their philosophic-subjects, half, like Juvenal, disdainful of the *graeculi esurientes*, began to crumble and fall. Christ outsoared Mithras in the zenith; Julian came and went; the desert pillars were nests for stylites now and scalors and horse-archs wrangled in the streets. The oracles had long ago fallen silent. When, at last, the Goths destroyed the West, it is worthy of note that, through all the centuries of Byzantine splendour, Cavafy stays silent too. But when omens darken the sky over the City and the corridors fill up with desperate rumours, he finds his voice again. His times are of trouble.

Living in post-Khedivial Alexandria and born of half-Phanariot descent in Ottoman Constantinople, no one can better assess the blight of subjection to corrupt or barbarous powers or the fears and shifts that precede them. *Nourri dans le sérail, il en connait les détours.* He may forgive the triviality and the subterfuge; he blames it too; but the survival of older virtue in the midst of indignity—the demeanour of a hostage queen, when Sparta's glories have long since moulted, the symbolic content, surveying intact when a late emperor is crowned, though coloured glass may have replaced all the gems—glimpses like these stir his tragic sense and his pity to their depths. "The beds of the East are soft"; indeed; many of the poems, through various voices, extol their softness. But suddenly an utterance in his own reveals a different set of values. An ostracized Athenian—surely Themistocles?—seeks refuge in enemy Persia, and Artaxerxes loads him with gifts. Sifting among satrapies and Oriental splendours, he pines for the frugal rewards of Athens:

praise from the Demos, and the
Sophists,
that hard-won, that priceless
acclaim—
the Agora, the theatre and the
crown of laurel

—they, not the cloying riches of the Levant, are the only wreaths worth running for. Thoughts like these keep breaking through: the waste of time which imprisons him—or his reader—like an inescapable city; the meaning of the jagged Ithaca in the long Odyssey's end; the imminent Ephiakes ready to sell the Thermopylae of the spirit. Issued without preamble from an atmosphere of earthly delights, these warnings sound as harsh, for a moment, as the words of Mercury. His cast of mind is too diffident, too patrician and civilized for emphasis or apostrophe; but, detached in manner, by corollary almost, and as intermittently as the fragmentary sentences on his imaginary funeral slabs, a severe and didactic message coheres.

The wisdom and the sad austerity of the emerging figure is a surprising double to set beside the hedonism which many seem to think his distinguishing mark. And, as for the hedonism, even back among the Marsocic vapours and the reams and the minstrels of the Egypt of Abbas Hilmi and Lord Cromer, his skill with time and myth and reality is such that there is no need to follow his inclinations in order to share their interpretation in poetry. He has the gift of making private memory, passion, loss and valediction, and even the most trivial frailties, seem noble, moving and universal and akin to the ancient grief for Adonis, but with no promises of return.

Perhaps the lesson of this poetry, with a grim new relevance,

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# Loss and Gainsborough

**By Harold Beaver**

JANET BURROWAY:
**Raw Silk**
314pp. Gollancz. £4.95.

The setting of *Raw Silk* is East Anglia, but the emotional pull is towards a Californian childhood. From that tension—the woof and warp of confused Anglo-American loyalties—is woven the whole intricate bolt of Janet Burroway's third novel.

It is a Jamesian theme paradoxically prolonged into the late twentieth century: of the poor American girl who marries a well-to-do Englishman. The poor American now sets out from a trailer park by the Pacific; the Englishman is merely an executive on the board of a textile factory. But Virginia Marbleslier remains as trapped in her love affair with old Europe as any Isabel Archer. Finally she reaches Japan; she almost completes the full eastward circle back to California; but she returns instead to the smog of her married life in a restored Tudor manor-house—a life she had earlier called her "marital Los Angeles".

That may sound bitter, but the first-person account is by no means bitter. Neither, of course, is this a *Portrait of a Lady*. Rather it is the self-portrait of a professional woman of our time, with one child and everything the glossy advertisements can offer, except the strength of her own convictions. What she earns as an artist (with apparent ease as a textile designer), she can only filch by financial sleight of hand from her husband; what she feels as a woman, she can only sneak by an emotional sleight of hand from the stifling Englishry to which, for all her occasional turbulence, she has capitulated:

> I'd live in litter and the litters of strays, I'd eat spaghetti and take up pot. I would never see another tea cozy or a goddam snifter of Grand Marnier. I would never be deferred to in a local shop or pay cash for a threadbare coat. I would never cut roses, blanch peas, preserve gooseberries, dry bay leaves, pick an apple from my own tree. . . .

Such is her litany of despair. The English upper middle class has outflanked her. But the choice seems to have been made years earlier when her mother took her to the Huntington Library at Pasadena, where she "fell in love with the portraits of Blue Boy and Pinkie at the age of eight, and conceived a passion to see Reynolds's and Gainsborough's country". What had seemed a revolt against Californian mass culture turned out only to be another kind of submission: "I thought the hat-makers and the sign designers and the pop singers *were* the establishment. I was trying to have an Anglo-European rebellion on my own, and I found it heavy going."

So another kind of revolt has to begin, centred on her daughter's education (she loses) and her right to work in her husband's firm (she wins). But the real struggle is to find her own strength, away from her Californian roots, not merely to resist, not merely to parody, not merely to shriek or flap, but to mature, whatever the odds of her husband and his surroundings.

Her two closest relationships, on her own needs; for neither is fully reciprocated. The first with a young, happily married homosexual working in her department. The other is their file clerk, a suicidal schizophrenic, to whom she becomes loyally devoted. The monotony of that misery begins to see a kind of courage she had never thought of. For she herself heading for a breakdown occurs in Japan, crouched, like a file clerk, in despair upon *tatami*.

Ginny's sins are not those of commission or omission, but of submission as a woman and as an American. For she had kowtowed to male supremacy in the shape of European culture and technocracy. Self-mockingly she sighs: "I think I have a female mind, but I don't know what to do about it." We might, in other hands, have turned to a whine of rejection and defeatism has been turned by Janet Burroway's exuberant zest for language and social scenes from Takayama to Cambridgeshire into a spacy comedy of alienation.

# Outwising Wise

**By Michael Innes**

WILLIAM H. HALLAHAN:
**The Ross Forgery**
204pp. Gollancz. £3.75.

"Dayspring Mishandled" is one of the strongest of the short stories in *Kipling's* final volume, *Limits and Renewals*, and it turns upon those themes of hatred and revenge which from time to time a good deal commanded him. Maxillance Bates Castorley, an eminent but objectionable authority on Chaucer. He forges and plants on him an unknown fragment of a Canterbury Tale in which a girl facing an arranged marriage prays:

> Ah Jesu Moder, pite my oe peyne.
> Dayspringe mishandeelt cometh nat agayne.

The spelling "mishandeelt" is a minute touch supporting the deception, since it may be judged to reveal the hand of a Dutch copyist—also betrayed by "a certain Byzantine formation of his g's" and by "the use of a 'sickle-shaped' reed pen, which cut into the vellum at certain letters". Kipling crowns his story with such persuasive detail.

Whether intentionally or not William H. Hallahan has updated this story in a novel ingeniously grounded in authentic bibliographical history and within a setting of low life and criminal practices in New York today. O'Kane is a tycoon in that city. For some reason he hates Pickett, a tycoon living in Texas. Pickett believes himself to possess a complete set of the celebrated forgeries perpetrated by the late T. J. Wise, and these, as the more learned among Mr Hallahan's readers will know, Carter and Pollard in their celebrated work of literary detection uncovered fifty-one.) O'Kane plans to contrive the forging of another Wise forgery, and as this will exist in a unique copy which Pickett can never hope to acquire Pickett will be in a satisfactory degree infuriated and abased.

O'Kane hires a chronic drunk and compulsive gambler called Ross who happens also to be a distinguished if impecunious typographer. Ross enlists the help of a similarly disorganized man called Townsend possessed of literary interests which he would like money enough to indulge in the London of Dickens, Johnson, Pope, Fielding and Swift. There will, in fact, be plenty for both of them should they succeed, since what O'Kane will pay for so undeniably forged forgery is a hundred grand.

Mr Hallahan loses no time in plunging us into the detail of this formidable technical task. Every engine of detection employed by Pollard and Carter must be taken account of—in order, of course, that it brought to bear on the new forgery the old damning evidence shall appear. Esperanto grass paper betrayed Wise; therefore genuine grass paper must be found—either of the right vintage or susceptible of artificial ageing in some way. This and the yet more intractable problem of running to earth the necessary type from the correct English foundry, are pursued with a command of know-how that leaves Kipling standing. And there are diverse fields. If Mr Hallahan is to contrive a burglary he provides a burglar-proof set-up in lavish detail and then a burglar whose day time employment is burglar-proofing of a highly scientific sort. All these lores and sciences, lavishly deployed, might be in some danger of producing somewhat dry reading. But there is an equally abundant provision of more sensational effects. And at the end of this bibliophilous tale we are told that several of the detectives drew their pistols and commenced shooting". "Money" O'Kane says crisply at the start, "is why we all get up in the morning." Here it is into a world in which we shall be lucky if we get unscathed into bed again at the end of the day.

# The Sherlock of steam

**By Peter Keating**

V. L. WHITECHURCH:
**Stories of the Railway**
248pp. Routledge. £3.75.

*Stories of the Railway* is a minor literary curiosity. First published in 1912 and now reprinted in a facsimile edition with an introduction by Bryan Morgan, it chronicles the adventures of a "speciality detective", the first, apparently, in fiction.

Original in this respect Thorpe Hazell may be, but in every other he is a feeble descendant of Sherlock Holmes, one of the many "rivals" hurriedly created by authors who were anxious to fill the gap left in the popular press when Conan Doyle sent his hero over the Reichenbach Falls. These rivals have, of course, been anthologized by Sir Hugh Greene, and Thorpe Hazell earns his place among them, but only just. He is perhaps best encountered in an anthology or in the pages of Edwardian magazines such as *Pearson's* and *Harmsworth's* where his exploits first appeared: a full book, or even half a book, as not all of these stories feature Thorpe Hazell, is really too much.

Apart from an analytical mind which, presumably, every detective must have, Hazell shares with Holmes only a number of superficial eccentricities. He has a passion for rare book bindings and health foods (on both of which topics he has written learned monographs), some lovable personal habits mainly connected with his dietary obsessions, and enough money to allow him to spend his time solving what everyone else considers to be insoluble crimes.

In all other respects he is far removed from Holmes. He has virtually no interest in the psychology of the criminal mind, or indeed in any kind of crime that is not committed on, or connected in some way with, a railway. But once a train or a wagon, a packing case or a signal box, is involved then Thorpe Hazell is a detective to be reckoned with. A paragraph in a newspaper describing an unusual accident on a train will send him scuttling off to explore out-of-the-way sidings and branch lines; while at other times he hardly bothers to reach for his *Bradshaw*—a few pertinent questions are all that is necessary:

> "I see", said Hazell thoughtfully. "The corridor, of course, was on the *left* as you faced the engine. Can you remember whether the ticket-collector came from the front or back of the train, and whereabouts your carriage was in the train?"

This one, admittedly, was easy. Once the ticket-collector has been described as "a man with a black beard and moustache, and rather a gruff voice", then no Edwardian reader, hurried on the literature of Holmes and his rivals, could have failed to guess the truth. It was the valet who did it and he must be confronted: "My name's Thorpe Hazell—if that's any use to you!" and this is the first little affair of the railway he has solved."

It certainly isn't. The "little affairs of the railway" that he solves include cigar smuggling, blendish foreign agents, a disappearing carriage (from the middle of a moving train) and, as a clever variation on one of the most hallowed mysteries faced by fictional detectives, a murder committed in a locked train compartment.

In his introduction to *Stories of the Railway* Mr Morgan makes what claims he can for Thorpe Hazell and his creator Canon V. L. Whitechurch, but they are not very convincing; the printed evidence is too strongly against him.

# Speech for the speechless

**By Jane Miller**

JOYCE CAROL OATES:
**Childwold**
295pp. Gollancz. £4.95.

There is unlikely to be anything fortuitous about the echoes of *Lolita* in Joyce Carol Oates's new novel, for sharp-eyed, writerly self-consciousness is one of her traits and part of her subject matter. Many of her novels have been modern pastorals, stories about America's rural poor told by writers or teachers struck anything but dumb by the predicament of people unable to tell their stories for themselves. Her narrator here is a poet, and in a position to say as Humbert Humbert did at the beginning of *Lolita*: "You can always count on a murderer for a fancy prose style." Despite his superior émigré name, Kasch is heir to the oldest and richest family in a stretch of derelict hillbilly country, and a hermit, variously regarded by local people as a genius, eccentric and freak. At forty he falls in love with a grubby, whey-faced fourteen-year-old girl called Laney Bartlett, and then with her family: a feckless, accident-prone lot with a resilience he is unable to match.

Laney's mother is forty too, but a life force. She may read nothing, know little, think exiguously, but her passion for sex and for babies is felt by Kasch and his author as a rebuke. Living on welfare and the largesse of a series of rough lovers she brings up her uncountable children, protects her aged father and continues to live in his by now dilapidated farmhouse, which is lovingly and well described. Neighbours disapprove, there are punch-ups and batterings, children fall sick, her oldest son is horribly damaged in Vietnam and shoddily repaired afterwards, yet the family survives, sustained by the mother's childlike optimism and her unquenchable sense of who she is and what she needs.

Yet Kasch's view that poverty might confer vitality as some kind of reward for submission to a violent fate is not without its ambiguities, since it depends on his "own invention". Even as he writes "I am the author of myself" he is bound to admit that inarticulate people might say the same if they could or would, and that his powerful feeling for them does not make him omniscient—his imagination is no substitute for being one of them. Drawn to the Bartlett family by a curiosity he chooses to translate as lust, watchful, spying, extruded, he is finally driven to propose marriage to Laney's mother as a way into her tempting life.

Nabokov's hero suffers; his chilly disdain for and attraction to all that he finds tawdry in modern America recoils on him. Miss Oates is obsessive and exact about the flimsy, disposable, ugly side of American life, but her motives for dwelling on it are different. When the welfare lady visits the farmhouse after Christmas she is reduced to silence by the evidence of sumptuous spending, careless and inappropriate in her eyes which register the dressing gowns and the confusion of wrapping paper and wasted food with the envious despair of someone for whom Christmas is an organizational problem, an occasion for providing people with what they ask for, no more.

So what of Kasch, the poet (and murderer) with the fancy prose style? The characters are his and the style, which seems to wrestle with the expression of thought and sensation and settles for fragments, lists of things, a shortage of main verbs, abbreviated sentences and uncertainty about whose head it all comes from. Kasch speaks for everyone, but especially for Laney, claiming to know what she thinks and sees: "You looked around the room, saw the beams across the ceiling, the spider webs, the exposed nails." He interrupts his own ventriloquizing with shaped poems, word games, typographical tricks. Miss Oates has always taken risks with her narrators' relation to their subject matter, courting accusations of condescension, of commandeering from some vantage point of wordy concern the palpable effects on people of brutality and helplessness. She is clever enough to sidestep such attacks—though not to prevent them—for her literate narrators matter to her too, and it is their predicament which she most successfully conveys. In an earlier novel, *Them*, this was more openly put, in a preamble about a real event when Miss Oates was teaching English to mature students. The novel itself was offered as a response to a letter she received from a student she failed for "incoherence": "We women know things you don't know, you teachers, you readers and writers of books, we are the ones who wait around libraries when it's time to leave, or sit drinking coffee alone in the kitchen." In most of her fiction Miss Oates has been answering that challenge by undertaking to ghost-write the lives of the incoherent, giving them a voice. She does so with spirit and talent, and yet the endeavour has never quite come off—as if she had forgotten to listen—except in one important respect: better than almost anyone else she has detailed the nature of the need to do it and the character of the uneasiness and guilt which inspire it.

# Polluting the ice-cap

**By Vivian Fuchs**

THOMAS KENEALLY:
**A Victim of the Aurora**
222pp. Collins. £4.50.

The early years of this century were the heroic years of Antarctic exploration and it is in this period that *A Victim of the Aurora* is set. The play is that, unreal though the novel is, it deals the historical events and characters from which it derives. Thomas Keneally has chosen to use clearly recognizable episodes from the past as a backdrop for homosexuality, murder, execution and other unworthy practices and qualities ascribed to characters who are imaginary, yet many of whom would seem easily identifiable to anyone with a vague general knowledge of polar exploration.

The story of Captain Scott's five-man party which perished on the return from the South Pole is now part of our national heritage. Keneally's five-man party also perish on their return from the Pole. Apsley Cherry-Garrard's *Worst Journey in the World*, a classic of British exploration, describes a journey to Cape Crozier made by three men in the depths of winter in order to collect the first Emperor penguin eggs. In this book five men set out with the same purpose, but in the event only three make the journey. The association of ideas is so great (even the temperatures are the same) that the reader is led to believe he knows who the characters are intended to represent.

Today it is commonplace for writers to seek to destroy idols of the past. All sorts of ideas and motives are thought up for them and adjectives are judiciously chosen which will denigrate a person without the need to make a direct statement which could be refuted. Thomas Keneally achieves this result in an original way. All the characters in his whodunit have something discreditable to hide. They also suffer from obscure and complex processes which would be unlikely to get them past even the most naive selection board. Indeed, one becomes somewhat confused by their odd mentalities.

Polar men will resent this intrusion of the unknowledgeable into their clean world and simple life style. And even though the story and the characters are fictitious, the novel will surely influence the casual reader's conception of the behaviour of the real men who go south.

The inaccuracies of fact and the silly idea of a lone survivor living the life of a hermit in some ice cave can be forgiven, the misrepresentation of what is for many a way of life cannot.

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# The invasion of the Ivankos

## By John B. Dunlop

**VLADIMIR VOINOVICH :**
**Ivankiada ili russkaya o vselenii pisatelya Voinovicha v novuyu kvartiru**
112pp. Ann Arbor: Ardis. $3.50.

With the publication in 1975 of Vladimir Voinovich's *The Life and Extraordinary Adventures of Private Ivan Chonkin* in Paris, the West began to take notice of a gifted Russian satirist still in his early forties. Now *Chonkin* has been followed into print by a shorter but equally important work: "Ivankiada or The Tale of How the Writer Voinovich Was Installed in a New Apartment." As the subtitle indicates, this long short story has a direct autobiographical basis.

The plot is not complex. It is early 1973. Voinovich and his wife, who is pregnant, have been living for five years in a one-room flat in a housing cooperative for Moscow writers, and are anxious to move to more spacious quarters. Their right to the next available two-room apartment has been legally confirmed by a general meeting of the members of the cooperative. But there unexpectedly emerges a serious and dangerous rival for the apartment, a certain Sergei Sergeevich Ivanko. While Ivanko's credentials as a writer are less than impressive—eighteen years previously he published a thin pamphlet on the reasons why Taiwan should belong to Red China—his social stature is formidable indeed: he is a relative of former Chairman of the KGB Semichastny; he is a close friend of Secretary of the Writers' Union Fedorenko; he is himself a figure of considerable influence—a member of the board of the State Committee on Publishing, Polygraphy and the Book Trade of the Council of Ministers. Moreover, his need for the apartment—or, more precisely, one room of it—is as acute as Voinovich's.

While Ivanko possesses a three-room apartment for three persons and has put in a request for added living space only a few months previously, one must nevertheless sympathize with his plight. Earlier Ivanko had spent six years on assignment in the United States of America, and when he returned to his homeland it was with a bevy of wonder-working American appliances (the *pièce de résistance*: a "legendary" toilet). Ivanko's social position is now such that he could easily obtain a more sumptuous flat elsewhere in Moscow, but how is the poor man to move, fettered as he is to his American appliances? His only option, obviously, is to break through a wall and snip off one of his neighbours' rooms. Learning that flat 66—the one allocated by the general meeting to Voinovich—has fallen vacant, Ivanko decides that one of its rooms must be his. *Ivankiada* is a record of the epic struggle that ensues.

The protagonist, Voinovich, has only the law and "morality" on his side. His opponent, Ivanko, can with a single phone-call set in motion a chain of letters and calls which will reach the empyrean itself—the Central Committee of the Communist Party. Add to this the fact that Voinovich is perceived as a dissident, a *podpisant* (signer of petitions), *antisovetchik* and even, it is rumoured, a Jew (he is a Russian). Virtually no one believes that Voinovich has a chance. Yet with the staunch support of the members of the housing cooperative he succeeds, after an enervating struggle which lasts for almost half a year, in defeating his august opponent.

The plot offers a satirist more than a few opportunities to utilize his craft. In the service of his satire Voinovich brings a style which is a delight to read: ponderous Soviet acronyms and journalese rub shoulders with outlandish Americanisms and occasional archaic Slavonicisms; passages of devastating humour alternate with serious and even moralizing commentary. The tale is fast-paced, the transitions smooth. Voinovich dextrously mixes genres: "straight" narrative is interspersed with (or derailed by) selections from the author's diary, various letters of protest or declarations sent (or not sent) to Soviet officials, the tape-recording of a phone conversation, and extended fantasies about what Ivanko's thoughts would be in a given situation.

Voinovich also frequently engages in what the Russian Formalists have called "laying bare the device"—a deliberate toying with literary conventions. The narrator will break off his account to announce what he has just done or intends to do with the plot—the reader, of course, is well-advised to take such asides with a grain of salt. Voinovich also likes to apostrophize the reader. For example, after reporting that Ivanko has vacationed in Nice, he asks: "And you, reader, have you ever vacationed in Nice?" In the Soviet context this query is not uncomical. Stylistically *Ivankiada* impresses me as a dissident, a *podpisant* (signer of petitions), *antisovetchik* and even, it is rumoured, a Jew (he is a Russian). Virtually no one believes that Voinovich has a chance. Yet with the staunch support of the members of the housing cooperative he succeeds, after an enervating struggle which lasts for almost half a year, in defeating his august opponent.

While *Ivankiada* is obviously not written according to the canons of Socialist Realism, Voinovich has the norms and expectations of this doctrine very much in mind. He informs us at the outset that Ivanko is a "type", and in the epilogue he expatiates upon this. In another place he ostentatiously worries that he may be criticized for not introducing "a single positive *nachalnik* [superior in the bureaucracy]" into his tale. He refutes such slander by introducing two "positive" officials whom he encountered in the course of his struggle with Ivanko. The first tells him that "Ivanko is acting unlawfully but is omnipotent", and does nothing to help. The second contemptuously dismisses Ivanko as a crook, but also does nothing to help. Elsewhere Voinovich frets about whether he will be able to provide the "happy end" (he uses the English expression) which is *de rigueur* for Socialist Realism. He solves this problem by fantasizing a scene in which Ivanko is roasted by his superior for seeking to circumvent the law and for being a poor communist. Though the scene is good Socialist Realism, it bears, as Voinovich shows, no relation to reality.

Any discussion of Soviet writers—even of a housing cooperative for writers—must touch upon the Union of Soviet Writers, and Voinovich (who was recently expelled from the union) has no intention of ignoring this organization. At one point, impressed by the fact that Ivanko and his ilk are considered "writers", he idly wonders whether a cooking pot could also be deemed a writer. His conclusion: no, but a pot *could* be accepted into the Union of Writers. In another place he cites the retort, made in perfect seriousness, of a defender of the status quo: "we don't have a union of *talented* writers but a union of *Soviet* writers". According to Voinovich's conservative estimate, 90 per cent of the union's members are "non-writers", i.e. utterly devoid of talent. At the same time he is willing to admit that there may be "writers" of definite talent among those who serve the system, e.g. those who scripted the surreal "show trials" of the 1930s.

At the beginning of his tale Voinovich expresses scepticism concerning the belief of "Western Sovietologists" and of certain Russian thinkers that the regime's refusal to publish works like *Doctor Zhivago* or its readiness to bulldoze nonconformist paintings is due to a dogmatic adherence to Marxism. The key to the mind of the ruling bureaucracy (what Milovan Djilas has dubbed "the new class") is not to be found, he feels, in *Das Kapital* but rather in an "activist of a new type", Sergei Sergeevich Ivanko.

What is Ivankoism? First and chiefly, it seems to be an apotheosis of self-interest. Marxism is necessary to an Ivanko only as a screen behind which he can conceal his naked egoism. "Give him another screen and he will conceal himself behind it." When, for example, Ivanko is asked whether it bothers him that Voinovich and his pregnant wife are huddling in a one-room flat while he, Ivanko, seeks to obtain a spacious four-room flat for three persons, he replies in words which are reported back to his rival: "That's certainly one bridge I can cross over [Nu cherez eto ya kuk ruz mogu perestupit]." Voinovich unquestionably has in mind here that the verb *perestupit* (to step over, to cross over) can also mean "to transgress" and is kin to the noun *prestuplenie* (crime). And he clearly assumes the play on these words in Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* is part of the reader's intellectual baggage.

Indeed Sergei Ivanko is a kind of "overman", living exclusively for his own self-interest, totally indifferent to the predicament of his fellow men (unless, of course, they can be of some use to him). Ivankoism, not Karl Marx, is the key to Voinovich's tale, as Voinovich says it, the key to understanding of the ruling bureaucracy. The clan loyalty of a "type" is what he chooses to concentrate upon in his tale. That such loyalties are very strong is demonstrated by the enormous support which Ivanko is able to muster, including a letter from the bigwigs of Moscow—in his attempt to circumvent the law. Voinovich finds it of interest that the Ivankos who are wont to thunder against the Western bourgeoisie, are highly mindful of whether a cooking pot could also be deemed a writer. His conclusion: no, but a pot *could* be accepted into the Union of Writers. In another place he cites the retort, made in perfect seriousness, of a defender of the status quo: "we don't have a union of *talented* writers but a union of *Soviet* writers". According to Voinovich's conservative estimate, 90 per cent of the union's members are "non-writers", i.e. utterly devoid of talent. At the same time he is willing to admit that there may be "writers" of definite talent among those who serve the system, e.g. those who scripted the surreal "show trials" of the 1930s.

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# Fascist seedlings

## By Filippo Donini

**LUIGI MENEGHELLO :**
**Fiori italiani**
181pp. Milan : Rizzoli. L4,000.

After three good books (*Libera nos a Malo*, *I piccoli maestri*, and *Pomo pero*) Luigi Meneghello was already to be ranked among the best of contemporary Italian writers: a fourth book has now come to strengthen his position.

*Fiori italiani* is the story of the education of a boy, from elementary school in the little village of Malo to a *liceo* in Vicenza and finally the University of Padua, in the years that marked the rise and power of Fascism, and its ultimate collapse. Fascist education is the butt of some delightful sarcasm in the first chapter, especially in the description and mockery of textbooks. It is analysed more seriously in the three chapters dealing with the *liceo*, and finally destroyed in the second half of the book, which deals entirely with the university. But what brings about the conversion of the formerly ardent, then doubtful Fascist boy, to a total, active antifascism, is not the teaching of his professors but the conversation and example of a friend, an uncompromising enemy of Fascism who becomes a partisan leader and dies in battle. The book ends with some twenty pages of impassioned, somewhat strained evocation of this hero, Antonio Giuriolo.

The mere fact that the protagonist comes to maturity through the influence of an outsider is in itself a condemnation of the Fascist school system. Not that Fascist and religious propaganda were so insistent and pervasive as to become unbearable: "Organized religion and Fascism were supposed to be the culmination of the educational system, but one had the impression that they were swept under the benches." What was unbearable was the utter separation of education from real life, the uselessness of all that was taught. Even passing from the elementary to the secondary grade the schoolboy had felt that the "urban culture", to which he was now subject had nothing to do with the "peasant culture" from which he had come, and which was totally real. At the university this alienation from real life became systematic. The notion of the superiority of philosophy to all other intellectual activities is a sacred principle and beyond argument. Anything practical, anything that might lead the student to do something useful for himself and society, is considered a vulgar degradation of scholarship.

Though he is one himself, or perhaps because he is one, Meneghello does not like professors. His memories of his masters of Padua University, with one or two exceptions, are full of bitterness and scorn. He is less severe on the grammar-school teachers, showing some indulgence for their faults and some appreciation of their merits. From this more sympathetic, even affectionate attitude some memorable portraits result whose vivacity and realism constitute the book's greatest attraction. Portraits of fellow students abound likewise, and these too are very good, often brilliant and amusing. The qualities of observation and humour that made *Libera nos a Malo* such a wonderful book are still present, but with the difference that here the story is narrated in the third person: the author tells us what happens to S, what S thinks and what others think of him. S is obviously the author himself, but the artifice of referring everything to a third person, even though it may enable Meneghello to scrutinize and judge his own actions with a credible objectivity, at the same time takes away that delightful feeling of immediacy and spontaneity that was so fascinating in the earlier book.

*Fiori italiani* at times reads more like an essay than a novel or an autobiography, an essay on Fascist education and on the Italian character in general, a subject on which Meneghello has some interesting, not always very flattering things to say. He says them, however, with such grace and humour that their sting is almost neutralized. The humour is rather English and frequently derives from the sudden intrusion of an English word into an Italian context, a peculiarity for which Meneghello has been accused of mannerism, but which I for one find absolutely charming. Obviously, to an Italian writer who has been living for the past thirty years in this country an English word may sometimes come more readily than its Italian equivalent—or is it a deliberate choice? If it is, then it is also a splendid confirmation of a statement which the author puts in a tentative form: "Perhaps the maximum of theirs lies in imitating with the maximum of hard work the maximum of spontaneity."

# False dawns in the East

## By Stuart Parkes

**KARL HEINZ BERGER :**
**Die Wohnung**
306pp. Berlin : Union. DM 8.50.

**CARL-JACOB DANZIGER :**
**Die Partei hat immer Recht**
258pp. Stuttgart: Werner Gebühr. DM24.

Both these novels describe in the first person events in the life of two people who decide, voluntarily to make their home in the Eastern part of Germany after the Second World War. Although only Carl-Jacob Danziger describes his novel as autobiographical, the similarities between Karl Heinz Berger's own biography and that of his hero Franz Reguer also suggest some autobiographical elements. Here the similarities end. Berger's book is published in the GDR, whereas the name "Danziger" is a pseudonym and the book is published in the West. These facts are in themselves indicative of opposing attitudes to the society portrayed in the two novels.

Berger's book relates the efforts of five students to live communally in East Berlin in the immediate post-war period. The political division of Berlin and the Berlin Blockade, both viewed from a strictly Eastern standpoint, form the background to the work. Its main interest lies in the way it describes a social experiment that fails, something that is rare in East German literature. The five students set out to create an ideal intellectual community which is to be characterized by its open discussion of all issues. In the end, it breaks up. One of its members dies, two go to the West, while the other two, including the narrator, marry. As the two wives have no feeling for social experiment, the previous way of life comes to an end. Despite the new political order, the old patterns of marriage and family life are reinstated.

What is missing in Berger's book is any real discussion of the question whether political change should generate change in other areas of life. One is left with the feeling that, despite the general orthodoxy of his views, the narrator looks back with regret, nostalgia to the attempt to find a new form of personal life. In all, *Die Wohnung* leaves no clear impression, not least because of its style, which is marked by interminably long sentences that seem a pale reflection of Thomas Mann.

Whereas Berger's Regner moves to East Berlin from Cologne, Danziger returns to the city of his birth from Palestine, where he has been a refugee from the Nazis. His arrival, in 1950, is a year after the foundation of the GDR. The novel describes his attempts over the next fifteen years or so to establish himself both as a writer and as a full member of society. One yardstick for being accepted is party membership; yet he is refused on two occasions when he thinks he is nearing his goal. His career as a writer is almost equally unsuccessful. He is constantly being asked to rewrite his books for ideological reasons and, when they do appear, they do not sell.

As the bitterly ironic title suggests, Danziger's work reflects the frustrations of someone who has lost his ideals. Those with whom he sought to identify would not accept him. Thus it is an admirable book that makes compelling reading. It is true there are inconsistencies; at times he looks back with pride on his literary works; others he dismisses them as hack writing. Finally, however, one is forced to feel sympathy with such a one who has been so cruelly disenchanted, even if his ideals led him to weep bitterly on hearing of the death of Stalin!

The anonymity of the novel prevents a final judgment; one would like to be able to read the author's previous works. Many will sympathize with his strictures against the authoritarianism of the party while recent events in the GDR—the expulsion of Biermann and the campaign against those who criticized this step—confirm Danziger's experience that its cultural policy is neither good for authors nor for the reputation of the country. If the present policies continue, only uncontroversial books like Berger's will be published and many more "Danzigers" will be created.




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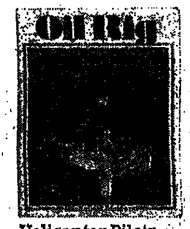


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# Chic transit

**By Doris Langley Moore**

**ERNESTINE CARTER :**
*The Changing World of Fashion*
256pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £8.50.

The first thing we do on taking up a richly illustrated book is naturally to look at the pictures, and very often that is the last thing too. If the pictures are an entertainment in themselves, we turn back to them, this time perusing the captions, and probably leave the text for another day—a day that somehow goes on being postponed. Ernestine Carter's *The Changing World of Fashion* has such a fascinating assortment of unhackneyed illustrations that this temptation to skim from one page to another is inevitable; but I recommend those who would probe the mysteries of women's dress in our own century to begin reading at the beginning and go straight on, for the book is written by an authority, a practical exponent for many years of fashion as presented in journals both glossy and plain, and a scholar of wide reading. To treat even of current fashion without some knowledge of its intricate workings is like drawing a dressed figure without knowledge of anatomy. Mrs Carter is an anatomist of skill.

In America, Britain, France, and Italy, she has attended at least as many collections, photographic sessions, and foregatherings for trade promotion as anyone alive. Her circle of acquaintance has included the leading designers of the past and present and, undoubtedly (through her fashion-school contacts), the future: and her *Sunday Times* awards were the occasion of grand annual parties. She makes no pretentious claims—does not, for example, assert that fashion reveals the subtlest depths of feminine psychology or that it inspires art. On the contrary, she shows that its sources are often quite superficial or accidental, and that artists provide inspiration for the designers of clothes rather than the other way round. Even there the influence is limited, painters at all times having been inclined to depict their sitters in ceremonial dress or fanciful garments remote from the vogue. Those to whom the vogue was interesting and worth recording have usually been underestimated in their own day.

Realistic portraiture by the most famous artists of one epoch has been much concerned with harlequins, clowns, acrobats, pseudo-gipsies, anything but the contemporary chic that does, it is true, soon date a picture, but may make it all the more expressive and delightful when the gap in appreciation has been closed by time. So little have the creations of fashion been valued that it is not much over a century since it became customary to attach the couturier's name to a dress—excluding ladies' tailors, always male, who started the practice of labelling before 1860. Mrs Carter not only gives full credit to couturiers, but is particularly good at identifying those designers whose work still, on the whole, remains anonymous even when their products carry the name of the firm which sells them to the public.

Who, buying a coat from some leading furrier, ever thinks of asking what craftsman behind the scenes planned how the costly skins should be used? Who, until recently, could have named the individual maker of the brooch, bracelet, or necklace purchased at a jeweller's shop? Though a footwear trade was the first to sell its wares, only the vendor was an *identity*, never the designer. Ernestine Carter, wherever possible, gives due recognition to that indispensable technician. The designer, of course, be adverse. She singles out Louis Réard, who named his two-piece swimming suit a bikini four days after the bombs on Bikini atoll had exploded, and leaves him justly stigmatized for "extraordinary tastelessness".

The twentieth century has seen as many reason-defying fashions as any previous age, yet from decade to decade we have congratulated ourselves on each new mode as more convenient and sensible and alluring than anything our forebears knew. Stiletto heels have pierced floors and carpets, tight-fitting corsets and dresses have made some a martyrdom, hobble skirts and "pencil-slim" skirts have restricted movement, extended skirts have swept objects off coffee tables, heavily trimmed huge hats have needed, despite twelve-inch pins to be held on when the least wind blew; hairlessness has required constant and expensive attention in hairdressing. Is there something about fashion which positively demands an element of unreason?

On all its curious manifestations since 1900 or thereabouts, this book gives us the maximum of information with the minimum of social moralizing, heavy Freudian interpretation, and dubious prophecy. The handsome production and brilliance of the contents as well as the comparative modest price, combine to make it the best guidebook likely to be available on high fashion as enjoyed or endured within living memory.

# The conners and the conned

**By Richard Calvocoressi**

**GILES AUTY :**
**The Art of Self-Deception**
175pp. Libertarian Books. £5.95.

*The Art of Self-Deception* is published under the label of Libertarian Books, who were responsible recently for bringing out a volume entitled *Ninety per Cent is Crap.* This amounted to an examination of the statements and promises of politicians—interesting reading. Giles Auty approaches the contemporary art scene, as much a source of worry to people these days as it always was, with a similar desire to root out the con-men. He is, as one would expect from a self-styled libertarian, particularly hard on the "experts" paid out of public funds: those who decide on our behalf what is and what is not art. State patronage and the national collections come in for heavy knocks, largely because of what Mr Auty sees as their slavishness to fashion (a fashion set mainly by the critics), their self-imposed "duty" to encourage and support innovation for its own sake and, at the same time, their pretence of remaining neutral, objective and open-minded. We have all been taken for a ride, not least the experts themselves.

Not new criticisms, nor are Mr Auty's arguments particularly original, but they are uttered with a freshness and honesty which gives his book a certain appeal; unlike other similar writers attacking modern art, the author has done his homework and the result contains a lot of good sense, although a suspension of reason may sometimes be the best requirement for evaluating art—a notoriously unpredictable, mad activity. Nevertheless, Mr Auty finds confirmation of his views in the recent controversies surrounding bricks, nappies, poles and the Tate's recently acquired "Starlit Waters" (a work whose simple poetry he is sadly unable to appreciate); and he takes an obvious delight in exposing the absurdities of art-critical writing, that daunting apparatus of special pleading which shores up the work of art and protects it in a dense envelope of words. The extraordinary paradox about much contemporary art, as Mr Auty realizes, is that while praised by its supporters for its high "idea content", it is very often a travesty of the processes of intellectual thought. The same can be said for a good deal of writing about art—language abused and contorted into a pattern as incoherent and confusing in impact as the work itself, which neither stands in for nor helps elucidate the object under scrutiny. But it is not an easy thing to talk in a meaningful way about abstract or post-abstract art. Silence is one way out but many would regard this as fleeing the problem. Not so Mr Auty; silence to him means less coverage of worthless art, fewer fabricated reputations and the decline of the critic's guru-status and power.

Although Mr Auty is right to censure the critics, it is a pity that he has nothing good to say about the Tate Gallery or the Arts Council. Few would deny that both institutions have made mistakes, as all institutions are prone to do from time to time, but such minor lapses of judgment are far outweighed by the post-war achievements of both bodies in creating a reasonably favourable climate in which artists can operate, exchange ideas, travel and so on, and in stretching the minds of an ever-growing public to an awareness of the visual culture of our own and past ages, mainly through a series of fully eye-opening exhibitions—far too many to list here. Mr Auty makes the classic mistake of believing that art does not feed off art: organizations like the Tate and the Arts Council have provided that vital food.

Reading Mr Auty's book, anyone would think that all the Tate did was to dish out cheques for piles of twigs. Only a small proportion of its budget goes on so-called experimental art; some would say not enough. In the Tate Gallery's Biennial Report for 1974-76, for example, of the total number of acquisitions to the Modern Collection in those two years, no more than one-sixth were works of a "difficult" or remotely avant-garde nature.

The fact is, Mr Auty is prejudiced, not only against contemporary art, but against abstract art in general and here one must part company with him. The fashion now, of course, is to denounce abstraction and call for a return to figurative art (as if the two were somehow mutually exclusive or ideologically opposed) and it is surprising that Mr Auty does not summon as witnesses for his prosecution Kitaj, Hockney, Dine *et al.*

It's all very well to wag a finger (or two) at public bodies for not doing what we don't want, anything altogether to resent when as Mr Auty does, artists who get money and a reputation for themselves; and who do this when Auty, himself a painter (and he is reminding us) has so obviously failed. This is not an attitude consistent with my understanding of libertarianism. Mr Auty seems to think that he has a unique personal insight, apparently denied to others, into the problems faced by creative individuals trying to make a living. I find this aspect of the book irritating. There are a few annoying things in it, including a certain amount of irrelevant and harrassing biographical information. And to make out, as Mr Auty does, that the public arts administrator is expected to have no preferences and to toe a rigid neutral line—"to demonstrate a good-natured tolerance of almost everything from the avant-garde to the media, to the manifestly bogus"—is nonsense. (I too speak from personal experience.)

Mr Auty is an embittered man who prefers Russell Flint to Picasso, but there are things in his book which deserve an airing, although many of his points have already been dealt with at least by those "experts" whom he accuses of the greatest degree of self-delusion. Nevertheless, it is a healthy sign when a vigilant person like Mr Auty exists and when firms like Libertarian Books *rush around to publish his ideas.* As for the "experts", many people feel the need for them, but it is a need that should not be immune from criticism, though I question how much criticism one can legitimately take from someone whose message is, in effect, that 90 per cent is crap.

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Jean Arp's *Collected French Writings*, edited by Marcel Jean and translated by Joachim Neugroschel is now available in paperback (574pp. Calder and Boyars. £5). It is based on a 1965 French anthology, *Jours Effeuillés*, compiled by the author's collaboration in selection, which covers the period 1920-66, shows Arp in characteristically droll dadaist vein: nonsense poems, memoirs, and essays on life and artists, document not only of his own life but also the artistic climate of his time. There are full bibliographical notes, an editor's introduction, and many examples of his amusing book illustrations.





# Their man in London

**By R. T. Shannon**

**HARRY F. YOUNG :**
*Prince Lichnowsky and the Great War*
281pp. Athens, Georgia : University of Georgia Press. $11.

If the name Lichnowsky evokes any response at all, probably nine times out of ten it will be in connection with music. A Prince Lichnowsky earned undying merit as Beethoven's most generous patron. He was the second prince. The prince we are concerned with here was the sixth of the line, Karl Maximilian (1860-1928), whose rather less resplendent claim to remembrance is that he was the last ambassador of imperial Germany in London, from November 1912 to August 1914.

Lichnowsky became notorious in Germany for insisting that German policy, as directed by Bethmann, Jagow and Stumm, was responsible for making a European war out of the Austro-Serb dispute in 1914. He denied that Britain had sinister designs against Germany and he denied that he had been "duped" by Grey and his advisers at the Foreign Office. He had repeated again and again to the Wilhelmstrasse his conviction that Britain would intervene against Germany to support France in the event of a general European conflict. He was not believed; but when the event happened as he predicted, he was blamed for not preventing it. Overwhelmed with a sense of bitterness and disgust at the murderousness of the war, he made no secret of his opinions as to Germany's decisive responsibility. His friendship with the Kaiser (whom he never personally blamed) was broken off. An angry *justification* by him got (unauthorizedly) into the hands of a German pacifist organization, and then into print in 1918. Scandal erupted. The prince was thrown out of the Prussian *Herrenhaus*. (He had the sardonic satisfaction of seeing the rest of them thrown out by the revolution four months later.)

But the coming of the German republic did not help Lichnowsky. It was one thing for the Germans to become aware of the "truly fabulous incompetence" of German policy in 1914. It was quite another to have the infant republic saddled by the War Guilt clause and the reparations and the impossible restrictions in sovereignty imposed by the Treaty of Versailles, which the prince regarded as quite as fabulously incompetent a way of ending the war as the Wilhelmstrasse's performance in starting it. After all, the prince was a patriotic German and no pacifist. He was a general supporter of the notion of *Weltmacht* and quite prepared to justify German fleet policy on social-Darwinian grounds. So the prince was in a dilemma from which he never managed satisfactorily to extricate himself. Moreover, when he did eventually try to produce a convincing justification, he proved to be an incompetent historian, and by muddling his documentary evidence exposed himself to damaging attacks by German historians led by Thimme who were dedicated to refuting the argument of Germany's war guilt. The prince had few sympathizers, and died rather miserably shortly after.

Lichnowsky's career was indeed tragic, and is worth tracing, as in this book, not only for the extra light it can shed on that already intensively illuminated era of historiographical polemics, the months of June, July and August 1914, but also in the larger awareness it provides of an expansively middle-European aristocratic culture and its fate in the era of twentieth-century violence.

The Lichnowsky family emerged from obscurity at the beginning of the eighteenth century precisely at the point in upper Silesia where the German, Czech and Polish nations met. The Lichnowskys were typically of indeterminate nationality (which meant also religion); but since the dominant culture was German and Catholic, the Lichnowskys became both as a condition of success. The imperial authorities in Vienna smiled upon them, and they became *hoch-und-wohlgeboren* and counts. Then in the War of the Austrian Succession Frederick the Great of Prussia wrested most of Silesia from the control of Vienna. The Lichnowskys found their estates divided between two countries. The larger part was now in Prussia but the more favoured part in Austria. The family's Catholicism retained its strong links with Vienna. Frederick the Great tried to orient it towards Berlin by erecting the Prussian lands into a *majorat* or entail supporting a princely title and dignity. But it was not until Bismarck finally drove Austria out of Germany in 1866 that the Lichnowskys really accepted Berlin and the hereditary seat in the Prussian *Herrenhaus* as the logical focus of their principal political and social interests.

Even so, the sixth prince (he succeeded in 1901) was born and bred in a peculiarly *mitteleuropäische* cosmopolitan aristocracy. His mother was a Croy, of a mediatized house who married on equal terms with sovereign dynasties; which made Karl Max kin with, for example, the Archduke Frederick of the Austro-Serb dispute in 1914. He denied that Britain had sinister designs against Germany and he denied that he had been "duped" by Grey and his advisers at the Foreign Office. He had repeated again and again to the Wilhelmstrasse his conviction that Britain would intervene against Germany to support France in the event of a general European conflict. He was not believed; but when the event happened as he predicted, he was blamed for not preventing it. Overwhelmed with a sense of bitterness and disgust at the murderousness of the war, he made no secret of his opinions as to Germany's decisive responsibility. His friendship with the Kaiser (whom he never personally blamed) was broken off. An angry *justification* by him got (unauthorizedly) into the hands of a German pacifist organization, and then into print in 1918. Scandal erupted. The prince was thrown out of the Prussian *Herrenhaus*. (He had the sardonic satisfaction of seeing the rest of them thrown out by the revolution four months later.)

All these Austrian and Catholic connections did not make Lichnowsky at all pro-Austrian in disposition. Quite the contrary, in fact. He used to say that he knew the Vienna crowd too well to have any confidence in their capacities. At the centre of his critique of Berlin's policy in 1914 was a conviction that Germany had irresponsibly abdicated its true role of dominance in the alliance and allowed its interests to be subordinated to the requirements of Austrian Balkan policy. Lichnowsky, more Old Prussian than the Old Prussians, argued for a return to the "true" Bismarckian policy, before the fatal aberration of the Austrian alliance of 1879: good relations with Russia. This would enable Russia to throw over France and Germany to throw over Austria. French *revanchisme* would be thus nullified and Austrian problems in the Balkans localized. The British, relieved of anxiety about a German threat to French independence, would be able to relax and, in such an improved atmosphere, a sensible solution to the naval problem would soon be found.

These arguments explain why Lichnowsky irritated the Wilhelmstrasse beyond endurance. They possessed a Europe susceptible to pure cabinet diplomacy, insulated from public opinion and demagogic passions. Bismarck himself had been unable to sustain the Old Prussian policy against German national and Slav sentiment; it was not in question in the twentieth century for the Reich to conduct a foreign policy which would have been, in effect, a conspiracy against the German people.

Lichnowsky's arguments were as remote from German public realities as his beautiful estates at Kuchelna and Grätz were remote from the industries of the Ruhr or the docks of Hamburg. Germany's commitment to Austria was a commitment to the deepest feelings for "Germandom" in the German public mind; and for Lichnowsky to assert that Bethmann gave the emperor of Austria five million German soldiers merely to avenge the murder of his nephew is a puerility which Harry F. Young does not attend to with sufficient severity.

On the other hand, Lichnowsky, as ambassador in London, was on much stronger ground in his criticisms of Berlin's willingness to deceive itself about British intentions as to intervention in a European war. The irony was that because it suited Lichnowsky's general arguments (which were useless) to insist that the British would intervene (which was true), the uselessness of his general arguments blinded the Wilhelmstrasse to the truth of his particular advice from London.

In fact, Lichnowsky was an unfortunate choice for that post. His qualifications were that he enjoyed a brilliant social position (so unlike the upstart Schoen at Paris, for example) and would dazzle English society, that he was "sound" about the fleet, and that he was genuinely anxious to secure a good understanding with the British. The fleet problem was not at that time, in any case, critical; and agreement about Portuguese colonies and the Baghdad railway and the Balkans gave Lichnowsky somewhat exaggerated hopes about the possibilities of his embassy. He preened himself on a "special relationship" with his cousin Benckendorff, the Russian ambassador (also the son of a Croy); and this, together with his persistent anti-Austrian nagging, made him seem to Berlin more like someone relaying the British point of view to them than their point of view to the British. For all his devotion, honesty, and goodwill, Lichnowsky was simply not the right man at that time to get across to Berlin what it needed to know. What was required was someone who shared Berlin's general assumptions and who thus possessed Berlin's confidence, but who had the capacity to see a fatal flaw in the logic. Doubtless such a man existed, and it is a great tragedy that he was not sent to London in 1912. Who knows what the consequences might have been? A general revision of Germany's strategic plan and a return to the elder Moltke's priority for the eastern front?

Mr Young's handling of all this is, in general, rather like Prince Lichnowsky himself. Mr Young is quite good where the prince was quite good, on the question of the British. He is not at all so good where the prince was not so good, that is to say, on pretty well every other diplomatic area, and on the nature of the German political system. Dealing with the Embassy in London in itself thus tends to give a rather distorted view of things. As with the prince as a person, there is an insufficiency of depth. On the other hand, Mr Young is excellent about the family and the estates.

The fall of the House of Lichnowsky took place in two acts. In the first, following the German defeat and the break-up of Austria-Hungary, resurgent Poles and Czechs set about carving up the estates, five sixths of which now lay in the new states of Poland and Czechoslovakia. Lichnowsky was left with enough to sustain a comparatively modest and rather unprincely existence. He sold the collection of paintings and the house in Berlin. Emil Ludwig recalled the prince's passive indifference at being stopped on his own property by a Polish border guard and having his car searched for possible contraband. Golo Mann recalled a visit to Kuchelna at Christmas 1923: "A melancholy loneliness lay over the whole, and the master of the house was probably without any hope." The second act came after the sixth prince's death in 1928 with the Nazi defeat and the arrival of the communists, driving the Lichnowskys across Germany on a tractor and eventually to Brazil, where they are now settled.

What is the moral to be deduced? Certainly not that the prince was quite such an immaculately tragic victim of fabulous incompetence as this book rather too sympathetically tends to suggest. Lichnowsky's career undoubtedly highlights the importance of governments getting sound advice and correct intelligence. In the end, one comes down to the conclusion that sound advice and correct intelligence are most likely to have their desired effect within a comprehensively integrated diplomatic arrangement of understanding and confidence. What a pity Lichnowsky was not sent to Vienna. He would have done a very useful job in influencing the Balhausplatz.


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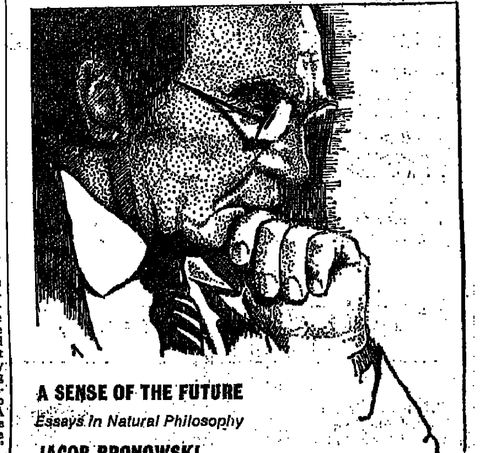

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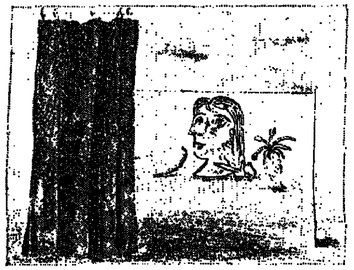

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Foreword by Vladimir Bukovsky
510pp. Gollancz. £6.95.

**MALCOLM LADER :**

**Psychiatry on Trial**
201pp. Penguin. 80p.

While weatherbound at Moscow's domestic airport one morning in the spring of 1972, having read all the books I had brought with me, I sampled the literature provided in the foreigners' lounge by our Soviet hosts. There were three booklets in a variety of languages. One, called "L'Anticommunisme: Profession des Sionistes" (they had run out of the English edition), contained a clever attack on Zionists, who were said to have aided Hitler, and Zionism, which was regarded as one of the chief instruments of the subversive political and ideological struggle being waged by world imperialism against the Soviet Union and its socialist allies. The other two booklets were straightforward statements of the reasons why there had to be a fight to the death between capitalism, in all of its various manifestations, and communism. The style was forthright, the argument logical and the conclusion unequivocal. By one means or another, in the long run, they would take us over. I never understood so clearly which side I was on.

Any Westerner who reads Evgenia Ginsberg, Anatoli Marchenko or Alexander Solzhenitsyn knows that the Soviet Union is not a liberal democracy, that the courts are not independent, that speech is not free, and that ideological dissenters are liable to be locked up and punished. Anyone who reads Natalya Gorbanevskaya or Zhores Medvedev knows that dissent can lead to the psychiatric hospital as well as to the prison. The merit of the book by Sidney Bloch and Peter Reddaway is that it provides information about some 210 people interned in psychiatric hospitals (mostly of the prison type) between 1962 and 1976, a rate of fifteen per year. This number includes only those about whom the authors have a moderate or substantial amount of information. The authors' attention to accuracy reflects the high standards characteristic of the chief *samizdat* publication, *A Chronicle of Current Events*, in which much of the material was first published

Four stories—those of Natalya Gorbanevskaya, Pyotr Grigorenko, Zhores Medvedev and Gennady Shimanov—are described in detail in *Russia's Political Hospitals*, and used to illustrate deficiencies in Soviet law and medico-legal procedure, in the diagnostic system adopted, and in the treatment meted out. The last two people were committed to hospital under the civil law and were not incarcerated for long. Commitment under the criminal law is the usual procedure and the period in hospital usually lasts much the same time as a prison sentence. Most of the dissenters would have preferred to be accused in open court, to have defended themselves through their own chosen advocates, and to have served out their time in the camps.

The authors calculate that approximately 600 dissenters were in fact sent to the camps during the period under review. This number, like the number sent to hospital, is an underestimate, but the proportion—up to one quarter going to hospital and three quarters or more going to the camps—is probably about right. There appears to be very little to distinguish the two groups. The main provocations to established authority are much the same, whether the unorthodox ideas are political (Gorbanevskaya), nationalist (Grigorenko), scientific (*Medvedev*), or *religious* (Shimanov), or simply a wish to emigrate. Age, social characteristics and geographical location do not differentiate the groups. Certain ethnic minorities—the Crimean Tartars, the Meskhetians, the Jews and the Germans—are perhaps less likely to be regarded as mentally ill but, on the whole, the similarities outweigh the differences.

Malcolm Lader in *Psychiatry on Trial* tackles a much more comprehensive set of problems. His title expresses his intention of inquiring into concepts and practices that might be harmful anywhere, not only in the Soviet Union. The first half of the book deals with the framework of services, diagnoses, treatments, and the law in several countries. The analysis is always dispassionate and illuminating and serves as a simple introduction to very complicated issues. In the second half, Dr Lader covers much the same ground as Bloch and Reddaway and comes to similar conclusions. One of the most influential schools of Soviet psychiatry has such a broad definition of the most serious mental illness found in young adults (schizophrenia), that virtually anyone with unorthodox ideas could be so labelled. Representatives of this school are appointed by the court to form the psychiatric commissions that decide whether to recommend a verdict of non-culpability by reason of insanity. The process of referral to such commissions is influenced by the KGB. Thus political expediency can relatively simply ensure an appropriate decision.

Both books pay much attention to the Western reaction to these events and, in particular, to the part played by the World Psychiatric Association, a loose organization of member societies meeting at five-yearly intervals and held together in the interim by a small executive committee. This committee's record is not impressive, but the General Assembly at the recent World Congress in Hawaii passed a resolution proposed by our own Royal College of Psychiatrists specifically deploring Soviet practice, and another setting up a panel to investigate any future allegations, wherever they might originate. Dr Lader makes detailed suggestions as to a medical and legal code of practice which, if adopted, would do much to preserve the basic rights of the accused. He also discusses the limits within which concepts like "delusion" should be held if unusual ideas are not to be regarded as pathological simply because they are unorthodox. Finally, he recommends a minimal standard for hospital care, including, the right to refuse treatment.

One large question, important because it is relevant to the problem of prevention, remains unanswered. Why are most dissenters not referred for a psychiatric opinion, given the advantages of insanity verdict seems to have an all-powerful establishment. The validity of the dissenting beliefs is thereby questioned, a trial becomes a formality, and the length of incarceration is at the pleasure of the authorities. Lader does not ask the question. Bloch and Reddaway say frankly that they do not know, though they make some guesses. It seems probable that the process is haphazard. There are manipulators behind the scenes but many circumstances—the sophistication of the local KGB, the reaction of the doctors, the nature and extent of protest abroad, the degree of local support available to the dissenter, the evidence that some law actually has been broken—act to influence the decision. One can hope, therefore, that the strengthening of opposition at many of these points might help to reduce the practice.

It is impossible to understand the development of medical services in any country without knowing good deal about its politics. My own reaction to the Soviet Union is, I imagine, fairly typical of Westerners, and the authors of these two books obviously have the same feelings. A much broader and deeper analysis, of the kind briefly outlined in Malcolm Lader's book, would compare and contrast the concepts and practices current in several different countries, in order to try to reach a basis for agreement on professional standards. Such an inquiry would be concerned as much with the political system, the law courts, and the process of public criticism, as with the values and practices of doctors and their professional institutions. At what I think was the only occasion on which these matters were publicly discussed by a foreigner in the Soviet Union, I suggested that criticism of psychiatry needed to be taken seriously even by those who questioned the motivation of those who made them. None of the criticism put forward in these books matches the virulence of some critics of Western psychiatry. Perhaps the seriousness of the attack is in part related to the stridency of its tone. If so, these books constitute a massive indictment. But we should be having scored hits on one obvious target, comfortably assume that we can ignore the question of motes and beams. The issues involve far more than psychiatry in the Soviet Union.

# Revolt at camp 29

**By Michael Nicholson**

**EDWARD BUCA :**

**Vorkuta**
Translated by Michal Lisinski and Kennedy Wells
352pp. Constable. £5.95.

The river Vorkuta runs through the sub-polar tundra regions of Russia. In late May and early June, it is still iced over. Tsar Nicholas I is reported to have *decided against setting up exile colonies* there in the middle of the past century because of the savage climate and terrain. Under Soviet power, however, a coal-mining settlement was established in 1931 and by 1943 Vorkuta was officially styled a town. Since then its massive contribution to Soviet coal production has been recognized by the award of a medal, the Red Banner of Labour. Less well publicized is the fact that "Stalin's little komsomols" who opened up Vorkuta and many another desolate corner of Russia were in the overwhelming majority convicts and deportees, many of them "politicals" of one sort or another. The disdain with which the Soviet regime set aside another of the pre-judices of Russia's imperial past was echoed in its contempt for the health, sanity and lives of these hundreds of thousands of human beings.

Edward Buca cheated death in Vorkuta, but not for the first time. While still a teenager he had escaped from a Nazi concentration camp. When his native East Poland was annexed by the Soviet Union at the end of the war he served in the underground Polish Home Army until his arrest for attempting to assassinate a communist official. His death sentence was commuted to twenty years in labour camps of the particularly severe *katorga* category, and Buca served eight of these years in Vorkuta.

To survive at all as a *katorzhnik* in the 1940s was to pass through a savage process of biological selection. But Buca's account in *Vorkuta* is more than just another harrowing, worthy, if indifferently written labour camp memoir. For he became one of the ringleaders of the great strike in Vorkuta in summer 1953. Several camps were affected, but it was at camp 29 that the prisoners took their defiance furthest by officers occupying their own compound, scrupulously administering and policing it, denying the authorities access and holding out for a commission of inquiry into their grievances. The euphoria ended on August 1, 1953, when the battle-hardened prisoners rejected an ultimatum, linked armed troops massed in the compound and fell in hundreds under volleys of small-arms and machine-gun fire. Buca was in the forefront.

Buca's is not a gifted pen and self-analysis he is often superficial and gawky. Nevertheless, this is a timely book. In one of the first accounts of events at Vorkuta Dr Scholmer claimed that "the shock rocked the Kremlin to its foundations, but the seismographs in the West registered nothing" (*Vorkuta*, 1954). Soon the final volume of Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago* with its graphic treatment of the contemporaneous upheavals in the special camps of Soviet Kazakhstan will be available in English. Buca is a non-intellectual's view of the Vorkuta revolt; indeed, he is contemptuous of the ineffectuality of the intelligentsia in the camps. But he brings out clearly the tensions racking the domains of Gulag even before Stalin's death and in particular the role of non-Russian nationals, notably Western Ukrainians, in organizing resistance.



# The place of publication

**By Theodore K. Rabb**

**LUCIEN FEBVRE and HENRI-JEAN MARTIN :**

**The Coming of the Book**
The Impact of Printing 1450-1800
Translated by David Gerard
Edited by Geoffrey Nowell-Smith and David Wootton
378pp. New Left Books. £12.

In its most fertile period, during the twenty years or so following the Second World War, the *Annales* school of French historians produced a remarkable series of truly seminal books. Few monographs assume the status of classics, and fewer still are recognized as such in the lifetimes of their authors, but from Paris in these decades there came at least half a dozen. Considering their stature, it is extraordinary that English translations have begun to appear only in the past three or four years. The present volume, for instance, published nearly twenty years after the original edition, is long overdue. It ranks easily among the most consequential works of recent French scholarship, yet its impact has undoubtedly been blunted by the lack of a translation. To be fair, reviews and reviewers can scarcely be expected to spot winners at the hour of their birth; nevertheless, the attention the English-speaking world has given, not only to this book, but to the entire genre it initiated, has borne little relation to its importance. The *TLS* can perhaps be forgiven for having bestowed no notice at all on *L'Apparition du livre* in 1958; the slow recognition accorded by scholars outside France to "The History of the Book" (as the sub-field has come to be known) in the interim is less excusable.

The approach devised by Lucien Febvre, and developed to full maturity by his distinguished disciple Henri-Jean Martin, is deceptively simple. Without denying the value of the vast traditional literature on the subject, they leave aside the themes it has pursued since the days of the first bibliophile—connoisseurship, the dating of editions, problems of attribution, disputes over priority in inventions, the history of individual titles, the *oeuvre* of different printers, publishers, booksellers, or illustrators, and the study of particular advances or successes. Instead, they try to see the picture as a whole, and ask questions about books not for their own sakes, but as artifacts of the societies that produced, bought, and read them. They are concerned less with the name and starting-date of the first press than with the reasons printing came to be of interest at all in the mid-fifteenth century. To give another example: they do not consider the issues of finance and distribution to be peripheral to the main subject, but treat them as significant evidence both of Europe's economic and business structure and of the nature of publishing itself.

Taking as their point of departure the needs printing could serve, and the effects it could have, Febvre and Martin try to be precise about the place of books in European history. They are little tempted to celebrate great inventions, heroic explorers, or beautiful objects. Indeed, their inclination is to be as sceptical as possible about the larger claims made for the press by contemporaries and posterity. They emphasize, for instance, the importance of the discovery and improvement of paper as a precondition for the development of printing. Paper gets an entire chapter, whereas the usual homages to Gutenberg and to various technical breakthroughs receive paragraphs or less. The *conditions*, rather than the individual geniuses, are what count. And instead of adopting the reverential attitude that has been common since Francis Bacon placed printing alongside gunpowder and the compass as the great transformers of the Renaissance world, they take caution as their watchword. In the long run, it is true, books helped bring about vital changes in thought and attitude. But the initial effect, according to Febvre and Martin, was often ambiguous.

They point out, first, that publication frequently gave a new lease of life to works that otherwise might not have survived. The instinct was conservative, especially among the authorities who controlled production. In the authors' words :

> Although printing certainly helped scholars in some fields, on the whole it could not be said to have hastened the acceptance of new ideas or knowledge. In fact, by popularizing long cherished beliefs, strengthening traditional prejudices and giving authority to seductive fallacies, it could even be said to have represented an obstacle to the acceptance of many new views. Even after new discoveries were made they tended to be ignored and reliance continued to be placed in conventional authorities.

Such an assessment depends on a confident judgment of what is valuable or not, and Febvre and Martin do not hesitate : "Where time had not begun to winnow the wheat from the chaff [among books by contemporaries] there was an even higher proportion of valueless work.... The number of authors getting into print on scientific subjects rose each year, but the majority of works were of no lasting scientific interest."

More recent scholars might be less cavalier, arguing that the very growth of science was what mattered, and they might give greater weight to the innovative consequences of printing. Yet few historians of the book have been as careful as Febvre and Martin not to run ahead of their evidence. Such sobriety is unusual among pioneers, *but it did not prevent* them from asserting those claims they felt they could justify. For example, they portray the first publishers and booksellers as spiritual ancestors of the new entrepreneurship of the sixteenth century. This golden age, full of remarkable figures like Aldus and Plantin, is duly appreciated—not just for its contributions to scholarship or its creation of lovely works of art, but for its transformation of patterns of communication. And in two of the three overview sections at the end of the book, Febvre and Martin argue beyond demur that printing was essential both to the spread of the Reformation and to the establishment of Europe's modern languages. The francophilia apparent throughout their analysis is especially evident here—the French Reformation receives more than three times the space of the German—but the general case is amply demonstrated none the less.

These final sections have been the springboard for the new historical genre Febvre and Martin inspired. If the disciples have often tended to be more enthusiastic than the masters, it has to be admitted that the treatment of the Reformation and of language opened up the most exhilarating prospects. Still, it is also worth recalling that the first of the three overview sections at the end of the book, an assessment of the links between printing and humanism, makes a strikingly different case. Its theme is how general intellectual concerns shaped printing, rather than the other way around. In recent work, by contrast, the press has all too easily come to be regarded as an independent force. The attempt to understand books as they relate to a larger society has been extraordinarily fruitful, but the example of the pioneers reminds us that the lines of influence move equally strongly in both directions.

Since 1958, research into the "History of the Book" has concentrated increasingly on the lower orders whom the *Annales* scholars have made their particular métier. Martin himself has continued his magisterial studies into all aspects of the book in France during the early modern period. Others, notably Robert Mandrou, Geneviève Bollème, and Marc Soriano, have focused on popular literature and popular culture.

These investigations overlap with another new Ga'ic genre, the history of *mentalités*, but they retain their distinct origins in the preoccupations of Febvre and Martin with the book as material object. The chief non-French echo has come from the United States, where Elizabeth Eisenstein, Robert Darnton, and Natalie Davis have all enlarged *our appreciation of the influence* of printing. Eisenstein has confronted general issues; Darnton and Davis have kept their sights on France between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries.

If Febvre and Martin revealed the ways in which books created new trades and professions, extended scholarship, and changed beliefs and languages, we can now see printing in an even richer context. The *colporteur*, the ubiquitous peddler who brought books and almanacs to the humblest of all regions, and who reported local interests back to the bookseller or publisher, has become an essential figure in early modern society. The full range of the printing business, which called on paper makers, rag suppliers, ink manufacturers, and endless transport, has taken its proper place as a sophisticated exemplar of capitalist enterprise. And there is growing recognition that the relationship between so-called "elite" and "popular" culture was far more complicated than the traditional stereotypes of mass ignorance and boorishness would lead one to suppose.

By looking at the book trade, scholars have been able to gain insights into mass beliefs and assumptions that previously seemed beyond reach. Estimates of literacy have not suddenly risen, but it is now clear that the *veillée*, the reading aloud to rural groups of new books—such as the Bible—that had been brought to a nearby town by the *colporteur*, became a common ritual of country life soon after the spread of printing. Countless books, including calendars and almanacs of homely advice, and *even simplified* introductions to the law, were published especially for this market. Moreover, one can no longer doubt that "a few lines of communication were opened between professor and peasant". Traditional tales adopted standardized forms; new ideas were disseminated; and eventually the wise and the learned began to seek in folk culture lessons of the utmost seriousness. Hence Perrault's famous tales, and hence the origins of what now would be called anthropology.

Although the progeny of Febvre and Martin have been numerous, fashioning a new and stimulating area of study, one cannot help but regret that their efforts have been devoted so disproportionately to France. Generalizations remain rooted in a single culture, isolated from the comparisons that alone can separate the local phenomenon from the European. The experiences of Germany, Italy, England, Spain and Holland were doubtless distinct, and their encounters with the book were at least as rich as those of France. Nor should research in these countries be difficult. After all, the model has been set; the appropriate questions and materials have already been defined. Indeed, one can hardly think of a more promising or inviting subject for the aspiring historian. The networks of cities in Italy and the Netherlands; the religious and political divisions amidst urban diversity in Germany; the unique traditions of Spain; the effects of the London printing monopoly in England; all are likely to reveal different patterns of production and distribution, *and different responses to the* book. Investigations of any of these areas are certain to provide a new perspective on the findings of French scholars, and cause further revisions of standard assumptions. In other words, the humble book will not cease to reward its students. One can safely predict that the ever broadening implications of the work of Febvre and Martin will continue to occupy scholarly attention for many years to come.

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# Recognition of a rhythm

**By George Steiner**

**MICHAEL AYRTON :**
**Archilochos**
47pp. Secker and Warburg. £9.50.

On one level, we know very little about Archilochos, who flourished some time between about 680 and 640 BC. He came from Paros. Then he went to Thasos and may have fought in Thrace. It is likely that he knew something of the Greek settlements in southern Italy. He witnessed the eclipse of 648 BC. He appears to have been slain by one Kallondes of Naxos who was then banished to expiate the deed. But this is puzzling as Archilochos seems to have been a mercenary fighting again the Naxians. Archilochos' poetry survives in fragments of which only one (the seduction-lyric preserved in the Cologne papyrus) is of substantial length. Quintilian praised Archilochos' verse for its sinew and terseness.

On another level, we know a great deal. We know what Archilochos felt about war and wine, about the muses and sex. We know that Neobouli, daughter of a Parian aristocrat, had been promised to Archilochos in marriage and then withheld, possibly because Archilochos' birth was obscure. The poet's attacks on proud Lykambes and his daughter are of a rare savagery (legend had it that the flyted family hanged themselves). We know that Archilochos was a sharp observer of animals and of the ridge-backed contours of his archipelago under nearing storm-clouds. In fact, he is the very first Western poet to come through to us as an individual persona. His voice, his physique, are unmistakable. To borrow a phrase, which Christopher Logue applies to Achilles' helmet: Archilochos and his art blaze at us across two and a half thousand years.

This, to Michael Ayrton, was the raw wonder of the thing. It was Ayrton's peculiar need to submerge his own exceedingly powerful personality in that of other masters or mythical presences. In a kind of willed mesmerism, he became possessed by the Minotaur, by Berlioz, by Daedalus and, in the last stage of his creative life, by Archilochos: "I seemed to see in my mind a hard and heavy man, raising himself after a restless sleep and lifting his head from his crossed arms as if his elbows were tired . . . I am drunk with Archilochos . . . pared down to the meshed moving parts of a man and as tough as a goat". Geoffrey Kirk, who has kept an eye on the thorny, textual end of the project, considers that Ayrton's translations "have a wit and compactness that brings out much of the feeling of the Greek". Only Professor Kirk and the small group of his peers can judge of Ayrton's fidelity to the remote original. But as they stand, these lyric shards are superbly vital.

Archilochos is a fighter in whose "spear flows my Ismarian wine". He knows that the most reliable spearsmen to have beside him in the rumble are "short and thickset, solid . . . bowlegged, full of heart". He knows and can use something of the Homeric battle-touch, but observes that even in victory the work will be "man-filled" and that there are expeditions on which "Of fifty men, Poseidon, lord of horses, left only Koiranos". The night at noon of the eclipse has wrenched the world loose from its moorings:

From that time, everything became possible, everything.
Dolphins might now exchange with animals and leap into the hills.
Don't doubt
Beasts could desert the forest for the sea. They could prefer as pasture oceanic echoing ways to woods, water to fields.

What remains firm is the content of a vintage hatred, the warmth in the belly. Archilochos ached for Neobouli whose "hair poured shadow down her shoulders and her back". The edge of desire made him faint and pierced his bones. Now she and her vile old paunch of a father "have forgotten a great oath, salt and table". She has a monkey's humour; she sits "a sea crow, rocking on a jutting cliff, shaking her wings and working at her trade". But there are compensations.

These are set out, magically, in the Cologne papyrus. Neobouli is for others, if anyone be so jaded as to want her. A virgin waits in the garden, Amphimedo's daughter. She is unwilling to yield fully. Archilochos accepts: "Do not deny me the threshold, beloved I'll not break in." Ayrton's translation makes the passage at arms as poignant, as ironically deft as it was on the bright day it was lived or remembered:

This said, I laid the girl down among flowers;
in my soft cloak I enwrapped and embraced her
gently I touched all her flesh with my hands.
She like a fawn remained still but she trembled
as she revealed her fresh down I flowed on to it;
shot my white strength.

That sensual strength, tersely, humorously controlled, informs the sixteen etchings with which Michael Ayrton illustrates his text. But "illustration" is the wrong word. These images are at once a reply to Archilochos, as between wary companions, an elucidation of the poetry, and a self-portrait. Archilochos is drawn naked, because he is so strenuously of the flesh, and because the absence of archaic drapings makes him immediate to us. There is a hint, but just a hint, of Beardsley's mockery and opulence in Neobouli; her father is seen as a kind of bloater-fish, his mouth acid. Ayrton had something of Picasso's eerie faculty of insinuating his nerve and spirit into that of animals. "The fox knows many tricks, the hedgehog only one; a good one", says Archilochos. Ayrton's plate is an answering marvel, the hedgehog like a flower electric with thorns, the fox twisting on itself in baffled rage. And in the depiction of the top-knotted Thracians, stomping on a wretched fugitive, but themselves grotesquely barbaric and, in their stance, wickedly parodistic of that of the three Graces, Ayrton seems to have compacted a lifetime's vision of art critics and reviewers.

The autobiographical motifs are unmistakable. As in the great Minotaur sequence and in the brilliant Verlaine-Rimbaud series (drawn for private publication) Ayrton has, over and over, reflected his own features. Archilochos, hanging towards the darkening sun or leaning on his spear or standing in sceptical amity next to young Glaukos, is Ayrton. The singer's massive yet delicate hands, alive throughout these etchings, are those of the draftsman. And Ayrton is utterly present in the profile of a sea hawk and even in the pinched, long contour of Thasos under cloud fist. Word and line mock divisibly. They declare the pain and scandal of the survival of, after the death, he is harsh or immature, of the begetter. This rivalry was Ayrton's obsession. He pursued it with a contemptuous, sometimes self-contemptuous, openness which put off the mundane. Archilochos he found a lapidary echo:

If you are grieved, then grieve joy, rejoice,
indulging in excess of neither or
What must be done is recognised rhythm.

In this handsomely produced book such recognition is manifest.

# Doubtfully onwards

**By Blake Morrison**

**EDWIN MORGAN :**
**The New Divan**
118pp. Manchester : Carcanet New Press. £3 (paperback, £2).

Over the last decade or so, Edwin Morgan's poetry has achieved considerable breadth. Concrete poetry and pop art, structuralism and science fiction, politics and philosophy, film and theatre, lyric and translation: the range of interests has earned Mr Morgan the backhanded compliment of being "diverse", a description which often implies failure to discover an individual voice. Though an adept arbitrator between the "two poetries", Edwin Morgan has not won the unreserved support of either camp: his art of inclusion—the willingness to accommodate all manner of subjects, tones and styles—has told against him.

Edwin Morgan himself understands the impulse to divide and pigeonhole: "any classification is superior to chaos", a quotation from Lévi-Strauss, is the starting point for a concrete poem in his latest collection, *The New Divan*. But he might justifiably feel aggrieved that the interdependence of the "traditional" and the "experimental" in his work has not been recognized. Morgan is too humane and intelligent a poet ever to allow his ventures in concrete poetry, for example, to degenerate into mere cleverness and whimsy: moral or philosophical points are usually at issue. Moreover, his persevérance with oral and visual experimentation, once dismissed as "an intellectual poet's recreational activity", is now beginning to have important consequences for his work as a whole.

In his last collection, *From Glasgow to Saturn* (1973), urban poems such as "Saturday Night" and "Death in Duke Street" owed much of their documentary immediacy to the omission of syntactical connectives, an omission arguably "concrete" in principle. In *The New Divan* concrete poetry can be detected behind some of Morgan's puns—"be: before/the mast and be the aftermath"—or sometimes intrudes more explicitly, as he has always believed it could, as a vehicle for the liberal humanist conscience:

Angels with abacuses called their calculations
once, in an ancient scene of souls.
shrug now, it's not calculable,
dive in pools, dry out half-human
with their wings on rocks and
let computers mass the injuries
let computers mess the injuries
let computers mine the injuries
let computers mass the injuries
let computers mass the injuries
of merely mortal times.

The title poem of *The New Divan*, an ambitious 100-part sequence, involves a play on words which indicates how consciously Edwin Morgan has sought to unfix his various interests. "Divan" can mean a bed, a state council, and a collection of poems; the tripartite possibilities invite him to function as love poet, as political poet, and as interpreter of the divan, the fourteenth-century Persian poet Hafiz. Knowledge of Hafiz's work is not essential for an understanding of "The New Divan", but it is clear that Morgan himself has read Hafiz attentively when in the opening poem he addresses Hafiz—"You swore you'd be found shrouded in another/grave-cloth of pure smoke"—he is alluding to Hafiz's "When I am dead, open my grave and see/The cloud of smoke that rises round thy feet"

"Resurrections" is the title of another poem here, and though the inference that something mystical or transcendental might be intended is repudiated in the last section of the sequence—

Oh I can't speak
of that eternal break of day
memories crowding in from every kind,
stealthily, brazenly, thankfully, stonily

—resurrection is perhaps the key to the structure of "The New Divan". Mr Morgan "resurrects" not only Hafiz but various characters and incidents from recent history (memories of wartime Cairo, for instance), mingling ancient past and immediate past so as to provide "an endless/shot reel taken through centuries". This search for continuities ("Climb down into the pit/to begin" Morgan orders in one Heaney-like section) doesn't prevent a certain questionable luxuriating in the past—"I love those masses/of statues at your elbow, piled like the times/you prefer"—and though his resistance to the possible crudeness of a one-to-one past/present analogy such as underlines Heaney's bog poems may be reasonable, the sequence does lack the shape and direction which such an analogy can provide. Mr Morgan challenges and toys with those readers who find his procedures obscure—"Maybe you want the lyric line, you want the words/to lay their weight against you like—like what?"—but it is difficult to resist the conclusion that, like the *Cantos*, "The New Divan" is memorable for its fragments rather than for its overall design.

The fragments are striking, however, and show that Edwin Morgan has followed the direction implied in the title of his last collection: from Glasgow street level he has moved to an omniscient and more tragic view of the human condition:

Thousands
are in hunger, see no glory, and,
all are in desire so great and ancient
nothing heaven brings round,
nothing behind
or present or to come can fill their house
with what they feel they need, or quieten them.

The observations on what he calls "the iron immense absence" are not without energy and wit, but the vision is blacker than before, so that "even positive formulations—I don't think it's not going onward"—are couched in negatives.

After this long sequence, it is difficult to adjust to single poems, and for this reason the decision to print several other shorter sequences is a good one. Of these, "Memories of Earth" and the more successful "Pictures Floating from the World" are science fiction; "Ten Theatre Poems" and "Five Poems on Film Directors" pay their respects to other arts; and "Unfinished Poems" is a sequence of ten poems (Mr Morgan tends to work to a metrical system) in memory of Veronica Forrest-Thomson. In the love lyrics of "The New Divan" sequence, expressions of tenderness tend to sound less convincing than cynicism or suspicion ("I smelt. Soft de Jezzlin, all over him and that's a belly dancer's cologne"), as if Edwin Morgan were happier warding off rather than confronting, deep feeling. In this final sequence, where the concern is to express friendship and admiration, there are no such problems, a strangely important, at times irreverent tone paradoxically proving a more authentic expression of feeling.


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# The clearing of the soil

**By S. S. Prawer**

**NOVALIS :**
**Schriften**
Edited by Paul Kluckhohn and Richard Samuel
Volume 1
Das dichterische Werk
774pp. Stuttgart : Kohlhammer.

When Thomas Carlyle, nearly a century and a half ago, introduced Novalis's works to the English-speaking world, he saw in him mainly a thinker and mystic whose "truly wonderful, subtlety of intellect" rendered him capable of "pursuing the deepest and most evanescent ideas through their thousand complexities, as it were, with lynx vision and to the very limits of human Thought". He used Tieck's account of Novalis's life, and his own translations of such extracts from the poet's works as he knew and felt he could understand, to thrust his countrymen's positivistic noses into the kind of German idealism which Coleridge had tried to propagate when he explained metaphysics to the nation ("I wish he would explain his explanation", Byron had sighed in *Don Juan*).

Of the "professedly poetical compositions", Carlyle seems to have liked best the one which most nearly approximated to a scientific and philosophical treatise: *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais*. Of *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* he found it unnecessary to speak at length because it was "written, so far as it goes, much in the everyday manner"; "we nowise reckoned it among his most remarkable compositions". He was prepared to allow some merit to *Hymnen an die Nacht*; but *Geistliche Lieder* and other poems in more conventional metrical forms seemed to this respectful and sympathetic commentator "to bespeak no great skill or practice in that form of composition". Despite their "decided truthfulness both in feeling and word" they could therefore be safely ignored.

At the very beginning of their encounter with Novalis, English-speaking readers were thus deflected from his poetry and prose-fiction towards aphorisms and philosophical opinions. In our own century, interpreters like J. G. Robertson, Eudo Mason, August Closs, Ronald Peacock and Michael Hamburger have done much to redress the balance; but the progress of the great critical edition, begun by Paul Kluckhohn and Richard Samuel before the last war and continued by Samuel with a staff of younger helpers after it, tilted the scales once again towards Carlyle's side.

Not that the power of Novalis's poetry and fiction was now ignored—it was taken for granted, rather, was overshadowed by the Fichte studies and the fragments of a vast encyclopedic treatise printed, for the first time, in Volumes 2 and 3. Readers were fascinated by Novalis's many insights into the interconnections of mathematics and the arts, his highly original use of the concepts and terminology of the physical and biological sciences of his day, his direction of the ideas of Fichte, Schelling and Friedrich Schlegel towards ways of thinking our own century can find congenial. The reappearance of Volume 1 of the Kluckhohn-Samuel edition is therefore welcome and timely; it redirects attention to works which will surely, when the excitement about the newly discovered scientific and philosophical writings has passed into history, turn out to be the finest pillar of Novalis's fame and influence.

This third version of a volume which first appeared in 1929 and then reappeared, revised and extended, in 1960, prints a far more authentic text than any available before. Richard Samuel has now, rightly, abandoned the policy of modernizing orthography and spelling; he has been able to consult many more manuscripts, and could thus add important rejected or alternative readings as well as Novalis's notes for later elaborations and continuations. The two extant versions of *Hymnen an die Nacht* are at last printed side by side, enabling us to see at a glance how Novalis transformed the history of German free verse and of the prose-poem. Youthful exercises in the manner of other poets have been separated from later "Vermischte Gedichte" and consigned to an appendix; we are thus able to recognize that besides *Hymnen an die Nacht* and *Geistliche Lieder* there is a third group of powerful poems belonging to the last period of Novalis's tragically short life—a group that still awaits its interpreter and propagator.

The editor reprints the late Paul Kluckhohn's still helpful general introduction, bringing it up to date wherever necessary; he adds brief informative introductions of his own to the various works or groups of works, beginning with *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais* and ending with a generous selection of *Dichterische Jugendarbeiten*; and in his annotations he not only describes meticulously the provenance and history of each piece, but also explains Novalis's more esoteric concepts and allusions. Against the opinion of his collaborator Gerhard Schulz, Samuel retains intact the corpus of *Geistliche Lieder* which goes back to the posthumous edition of Novalis's works by Tieck and Friedrich Schlegel. The "Abendmahlshymne", one of the strangest religious poems ever written, a free verse ode that never has been and never could be sung in churches, therefore retains its central place in a collection of rhymed poems in simple metres whose characteristic blend of simplicity and subtlety, of personal and communal fervour, has been welcomed by many a compiler of Protestant hymn-books.

If we now wished, with this newly edited volume in our hand, to controvert Carlyle's low opinion of most of the texts it contains, how could we go about it? Several strategies would seem to recommend themselves. The first would be to show, by an analysis of the sequence of thoughts, feelings, images and rhythms in individual works, how wrong Carlyle was to find in these writings "an indubitable prolixity, a degree of languor, not weakness but sluggishness", and "a want of rapid energy". We would then have to demonstrate in detail Novalis's rare power of merging a personal experience of love and death with the general experience of mankind—an experience that may be paralleled with that of certain mystics, but whose expression remains Novalis's own. This could lead on to a demonstration of the way in which the impulse towards night and death, towards a world in which the distinction between life and death has lost its meaning, is counterbalanced in his work by an endless curiosity about the things of this world, the world of light, and by a determination to celebrate them with even greater fervour *because* of his experience of transcendence.

Then again one could show how Novalis's unusually close and detailed knowledge of contemporary science and philosophy becomes the basis of an art that uses, by preference, the simplest vocabulary to convey a highly personal vision of the physical and mental world. Take the image of descending into a mine, for instance, which plays so important a part in *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* and elsewhere. No one knew better than young Friedrich von Hardenberg, a highly trained geologist and administrator with first-hand experience of silver, salt and coal-mining, what the realities of mining were. In the works which he wrote under his pen-name Novalis, however—a name he took over from a remote ancestor, a name which denotes the clearing of overgrown soil in preparation for new planting—he transformed the realities he knew so well into multi-levelled symbols for the fascination of scientific studies, the descent into depths of the self, the exploration of received religious doctrine, the investigation of the instinctual and personal past, and, finally, the whole of terrestrial life. All this would lead up to the all-important demonstration of how Novalis was able to extend the range of poetry, to say what had been thought unsayable with the help of images that ranged from the simplest daily actions (eating and drinking, for instance) to the most recondite combinations of contemporary physics and mathematics.

Returning to our starting point, we would have to conclude by pointing to a power that escaped Carlyle's contemplation altogether: Novalis's ability to shape his work in such a way that its forms, its microstructures and macrostructures, become an essential part of its meaning. This could be shown by an analysis of the varying stanzaic patterns employed in *Hymnen an die Nacht*, each of which has a different history and function, of the way these stanzas are offset by the transformation of *vers libre* into what looks, on the printed page, like prose; of the imaginative use of limited narrative perspective in *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* which one perceptive critic, John Neubauer, has compared with the narrative procedures of Kafka. We could speak of Novalis's creation of a new mythology (centred on the famous Blue Flower) out of scientific concepts and the orts and fragments of older myths; and of his ever-astonishing use of successive poems and successive stanzas to re-enact, in rhythm and sound, what it means to pass from sadness to joy, from a dark night of the soul to mystic acceptance. And in parentheses, as it were, we might use the argument *ex consensu gentium*, citing the recorded testimony of generations of readers which range from Christian worshippers who considered their experience enriched by the *Geistliche Lieder* via French symbolists and surrealists to sophisticated modern novelists like Hermann Broch and Robert Musil, who found some of their own concerns startlingly prefigured in Novalis's writings.

It is always possible, of course, to oppose to the testimony of Novalis's admirers that of his detractors, from Clemens Brentano onwards—of those who felt repelled by his subject matter and his manner of treating it, who regretted the turn away from realism which *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* gave to the German novel, or who missed in *Hymnen an die Nacht* and the later poems the harsher, more tragic tones of Hölderlin. What our imagined demonstration could not fail to establish, however, is that Novalis's voice is both distinctive and authentic; that with its sounds and rhythms, embodied in particular structures and concatenations of words, phrases and sentences, it is at once personal and, ineluctably, characteristic of the poet's time:

Der Mond stand in mildem Glanze über den Hügeln, und liess wunderliche Träume in allen Kreaturen aufsteigen. Selbst wie ein Traum der Sonne, lag er über der in sich gekehrten Traumwelt, und führte die in unzählige Grenzen getheilte Natur in jene fabelhafte Urzeit zurück, wo jeder Keim noch für sich schlummerte, und einsam und unberührt sich vergeblich sehnte, die dunkle Fülle seines Daseyns zu entfalten. — In Heinrichs Gemüth spiegelte sich das Mährchen des Abends.

Who could now mistake this for the work of anyone but Novalis? Who could not hear his distinctive tone, at once soft and energetic; could not recognize how the passage evokes mood, *Stimmung* and *Gestimmtheit*, with a minimum of landscape detail, how it merges the inner and the outer, visual impression and dream, present, past and future, in three contrasting and complementary sentences; the first with bare coordination, the second more complex, the third deliberately short and simple? We may be grateful to this new edition for allowing us to hear this voice in such undistorted form. Occasional misprints—like the absurd one on page 265—will no doubt be corrected in future impressions.

One common distortion is, however, perpetuated by the volume under review. The portrait of Novalis which serves as frontispiece turns out to be, once again, the prettified engraving by Eduard Eichens, which makes Novalis look like a girl and which has no more authenticity than the similarly enhanced portraits of Mozart that one acquires when one buys a box of *Mozartkugeln*. The contemporary painting of the young poet, geologist and civil servant which Eichen "enhanced" shows a manlier Novalis, and thus accords much better with what we now know about him. A reproduction of it should be substituted for that of the engraving as soon as possible.


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# Irrespective of the facts

**By Paul Johnson**

**JEAN-FRANCOIS REVEL :**
**The Totalitarian Temptation**
Translated by David Hapgood
310pp. Secker and Warburg. £4.90.

All French political writing, and especially polemic, tends to lose heavily in translation. A diatribe by, say, Maurice Duverger or Jean Daniel, with its magisterial cadences and abstract juxtapositions and contradistinctions, becomes thin, if copious, prose when rendered into concrete English, which has an awkward habit of clarifying the convenient Gallic confusion between elegant *assertion* and actual *proof*. Jean-François Revel's manifesto, directed both against the fraudulent concept of Euro-communism and against the lack of intellectual rigour among the non-communist left which makes such con-tricks possible, is no exception to this rule. His argument, it seems to me, could have been presented perfectly well, and for English readers more effectively, in a 10,000-word essay.

However, what he has to say is unquestionably worth saying, and is very largely true. There is no such thing as Euro-communism if by that term we mean a humanized and democratized version of the Marxist "dictatorship of the proletariat". As M Revel points out, no communist government anywhere in the world has been able, or willing, to forgo the apparatus of a totalitarian state—that is, "a total monopoly over the economy, politics, the police, unions, culture, the legislature, the judiciary, the military, information and education". Even those regimes which have broken with Moscow, such as Albania, Yugoslavia and China, or kept their distance, such as Romania, have remained totalitarian—often increasing their repressiveness precisely because they have chosen an independent form of communism. He says, there now exists a considerable body of historical evidence which allows us to conclude "by observation not speculation" that there is not, and never has been, "a non-Stalinist communist regime". Stalinism was not a historical accident but a personification of a necessary and inerradicable ingredient in any communist system.

M Revel does not believe in the French Communist Party's professed conversion to democracy, which implies the toleration of opposition. At any rate it has flatly refused to permit the exercise of democracy in its own internal workings, and remains as monolithic as ever. He quotes with glee Brezhnev's remarks to an Indian journalist, justifying Mrs Gandhi's dictatorship: "An opposition prevents the creation of an emotional bond between the people and the government." Moreover, this ingrained communist habit of reinforcing emotional bonds with real ones needs must extend to all departments of life to protect the party's self-esteem and omniscience. M Revel reminds us (I had forgotten this instructive episode) that the French CP once promoted the claims of "an artistic disaster named Fougeron". When this painter's "torpid pretentiousness proved too much even for some party activists" and one of them complained, he was duly disciplined, a CP spokesman (the delightfully named Laurent Casanova—explaining that "reservations about Fougeron" constituted "a political attack against the party".

The failures of the Soviet regime seem so obvious, with Muscovites queuing for bread and, indeed, most other commodities, sixty years after the revolution inaugurating the workers' paradise, and with the Soviet Union, more exhaustively endowed in natural resources than any other country on earth, surviving at all only thanks to the grain surpluses of capitalist America, that Revel finds it amazing Euro-communism should exercise any hard-headed appeal. The phenomenon is particularly mysterious in France, since the French CP has long enjoyed a richly deserved reputation for extreme doctrinal bigotry, bad faith and internal gangsterism, and most French people, after all, have experienced an unprecedented improvement in their living standards under the aegis of self-confident Gaullist private enterprise.

Revel explains the paradox in a number of ways. Frenchmen are not particularly logical, or even hard-headed, when it comes to professing political beliefs, which he believes represent emotional responses rather than nice calculations of material interest. He quotes Proust: "The facts of life do not penetrate to the sphere in which our beliefs are cherished; as it was not they that engendered those beliefs, so they are powerless to destroy them." Second, the opinion-formers in advanced Western societies are peculiarly exposed to what he calls "the totalitarian temptation". This too is emotional rather than rational, dated in origin largely negative, for it is fuelled more by a hatred of capitalism, identified with modern materialism, than by respect for communist theory or practice:

It seems to me that the totalitarian temptation is really driven by a hatred on principle of industrial commercial civilization, and would exist even if it were proved that people in that civilization were better fed, in better health and better (or less badly) treated than in any other.

The weird illogicality of this secular puritanism is that it rejects Western free enterprise, which clings to non-material values (i.e religion), in favour of a system which professes pure materialism. The truth is that middle-class intellectuals—especially French ones—hate the things they know much more strongly than they love the things they do not know such as experience under communism. As Georges Bidault once put it, seeking to explain the devious voting of his party: "Nous sommes plus contre le vote pour que pour le vote contre." Hence the point is reached at which Soviet dissidents, simply because they have been much publicized in the West, are more criticized and distrusted than the monsters who persecute them. Sartre epitomized the confusion of values when he intoned, in reply to Albert Camus's criticism of Soviet labour camps: "Like you I find these camps intolerable, but I find equally intolerable the use made of them every day in the bourgeois press." Sartre in fact meant the opposite of what he said: he found the camps tolerable—that is, he was prepared to tolerate them as part of a wider political equation in which the balance of good lay with those who maintained them. In this balance the mere existence of a "bourgeois press" which publicized facts inconsistent with his emotional leanings was on the same level of moral turpitude as Gulag.

A point Revel does not make, perhaps because it is a point also against himself, is that the French intelligentsia are the victims of a pungent snobbery which insists there can be no truck with the right even when it stands for such unimpeachable causes as individual liberty and freedom of speech. There is the same tendency in Britain, as witness the bedraggled *Guardian*. But in France the attitude has deep roots which reach back into the eighteenth century, and from which have sprouted a beetling forest of historical myths; indeed the very word "intelligentsia" was first widely used during the Dreyfus case and originally applied exclusively to the left. No French *intellectuel de choc* who aspires to hold court at the Brasserie Lipp, or set the Compole on a roar, dare risk guilt by association with the capitalist ethic. It is not intellectually respectable to be anywhere to the right of Robespierre. The French have no real equivalent of Bolingbroke, Burke, Adam Smith, Coleridge or Disraeli—that is, conservative ideologues able to argue within the context of a free parliamentary system. There is no agreed apostolic succession of the right, ending in, say, Raymond Aron; since 1945, all France's great conservative or traditionalist writers have been intellectually inadmissible, and cannot be wheeled up in evidence.

It is this almost compulsory French intellectual adherence to the traditions of the extreme left which constitutes the real "totalitarian temptation". A member of the French government recently complained that more than 90 per cent of the university and college teachers in France were identified with the left. I believe him; the only wonder is that 10 per cent dare, or are permitted, to declare themselves otherwise—almost as bad as admitting you have never read Rousseau. In this respect M Revel is not egregious. Vehement as is his castigation of Marxism, he still appears to present himself as a socialist of a collectivist type, and advocates his own weakly formulated version of left-wing ideology as the "sole" alternative to what he lumps together as the twin evils of communism and capitalism. To be sure, he is less despairing than the new anti-Marxist fashionables, who have abandoned their gruesome idol for political agnosticism (or atheism). But, to me at least, he does not make it clear how his version of "socialism" differs from perfectly ordinary bourgeois liberalism. I suspect not at all, if only he dare say so. However, like so many of his colleagues, he cannot escape from the intellectual conventions of his class, albeit they are now increasingly linguistic only. By contrast, most French voters, when it comes to the point, are bound by no such inhibitions; if their hearts are on the left, their heads, and their pocketbooks, have a habit of drifting to the right, come election-time. The Euro-communist thesis no longer looks so persuasive as it did when M Kriegel wrote his book, and next spring, I suspect, the "totalitarian temptation" will be resisted, not (the French being what they are) without some agonized *arrière-pensées*.





# The complexities of Frenchness

**By Gordon Wright**

**THEODORE ZELDIN :**
**France 1848-1945**
**Volume 2: Intellect, Taste and Anxiety**
1,202pp. Clarendon Press : Oxford University Press. £15.

The massive first volume of Theodore Zeldin's study of modern France was greeted in 1973 by enthusiastic applause. The appearance of the second volume—even more massive—is likely to produce not only cheers but a kind of awe. One emerges from several days of total immersion a bit dazed, scarcely knowing what to admire most about Dr Zeldin: his energy, his erudition, his imagination, or his courage. Few historians could have conceived of a project so complex; fewer still could have remained afloat in the vast ocean of writing about France, contemporary and retrospective, that has appeared during the past 130 years; perhaps no other specialist would have staked his scholarly reputation on an attempt to grapple with a series of vast and almost unanswerable questions on which little basic research has been done. Indeed, one constant refrain in the book is the comment that the history of topic X or Y remains unwritten, is in its infancy, or (in the more extreme cases) has not yet been dignified by scholars as worthy of serious notice. Yet Zeldin plunges into each of these swamps or deserts in turn, and emerges triumphantly on the other side, having demonstrated with wit and insight that the expedition was worthwhile.

Two thousand pages on one century of a middle-sized nation's history may seem a lot. It is indeed; and sheer bulk will no doubt frighten off some potential readers. Every specialist, however, will henceforth have to reckon both with Zeldin's general interpretation and with the mass of specific detail that he has dredged up from the depths. (History, he remarks, "is a sieve that picks up only a small portion of the debris of the past". But his sieve has been remarkably retentive.) As for serious amateurs—history buffs and addicts of things French—they are likely to stay with the author from beginning to end, for they will sense the architectonic symmetry of the work, and will quickly see that each segment makes an important contribution to the whole.

It is true that the book is highly unorthodox, even idiosyncratic in organization and treatment. For the most part it avoids a strictly chronological order, even within the topical chapters; its stress is on continuity more than change. A chapter entitled "Hierarchy and Violence" turns out to contain four subsections on the army, crime, the colonies, and servants, the common theme of which is declared to be "mutual incomprehension". Even the subtitles of the two volumes strike a bit strangely on the orthodox ear; after "Ambition, Love and Politics", we now have "Intellect, Taste and Anxiety". Zeldin has chosen these six terms to epitomize "six different ways of looking at the individual"; for his declared aim is to focus on the individual Frenchman and on the almost infinite variety of French attitudes towards the world. This enterprise involves an express and sweeping iconoclasm; a rejection of most standard beliefs, myths, and stereotypes about France, a refusal even to use the ordinary categories, social or political, that are normally accepted as devices to control and order the diversity of human affairs.

Complexity is the result; but complexity does not frighten Zeldin—it fascinates him, and strikes him as a true reflection of reality. He describes his method as a kind of *pointillisme*, a breaking down of human phenomena into their basic elements. Then, as a second step, he becomes a historian-Picasso, viewing a given subject from several different angles at once. But Zeldin expressly eschews the usual final stage of the historian's work: the attempt to impose some kind of pattern on the kaleidoscope of events, to seek causal relationships, to generalize. "I prefer juxtaposition", he says, "so that the reader himself can make what links he thinks fit." Does this mean evading the historian's responsibility, and expecting too much of the reader? Perhaps. Yet the elaborate architecture of the work involves something more than mere juxtaposition of facts; it contains a generalized interpretation as well. Like a *pointiliste* painting, the two volumes are rigorously structured to form a pattern imposed by the author. And from time to time, specific judgments are advanced about the nature of Frenchmen and the meaning of their modern history.

What is the nature of that interpretation? For one thing, it is sympathetic but critical towards its subject. One function of the historian, Zeldin suggests, is to serve as a kind of court jester: an insider whose detachment and humour enable him to express some painful truths. One such truth, he believes, is that Frenchmen in modern times have accepted a considerable number of myths about themselves and their development as a nation—myths that are often misleading, and that conceal a deeper and more complex reality.

Such myths include the belief that France achieved a sense of nationhood early, thanks to the Great Revolution; that France before 1789 was pious and Catholic; that France pioneered in the development of modern democracy, and served as the world's model; that French culture, widely shared by its citizens, set Frenchmen off from less civilized nations; that France was and is Cartesian in temper; that modern France has been ruled, and its values shaped, by a coherent bourgeoisie; that ideological conflict has produced a fundamental split between left and right, between exponents of progress and defenders of tradition.

The facts, he argues, are quite different. National sentiment developed late, and remains incomplete even in the twentieth century; regional differences survive, and tensions between Parisians and provincials continue. The roots of religious scepticism and unbelief go much deeper than the Revolution. France was hardly a model of successful democracy; its brilliant culture was confined to a small minority, not shared or really understood by "the great mass of obscure and muddled men"; the bourgeoisie constituted no ruling class, but was riven by internal differences. To speak of "Cartesian France" fuzzes up the fact that "Cartesianism is a very woolly notion". The alleged division between left and right might better be replaced by a division "between those with a partisan mentality and those with a consensus mentality"; political leaders were moved not so much by ideology as by temperament, sensibility, style.

The essence of French character is complexity; variations are almost infinite, so that "Frenchmen cannot be classified or categorized". Despite appearances and self-images, France's modern history has been dominated by competitiveness and anxiety; in fact, France should be seen as "an infant democracy, characterized by confusion about its direction, and with a tendency to get lost in conflicts whose meaning often became obscure".

Much of this second volume relates to the role of the intellectuals in French life. Volume 1 concluded by describing that role as "crucial". Zeldin's latest judgment seems to be more muted, and probably more negative. The influence of the intellectuals, he believes, has been much exaggerated (still another myth exploded!). Their long effort to shape Frenchmen's thinking through the school system was in large part frustrated by the stubborn survival of traditional mentalities, values, superstitions; village sorcerers were still common down to 1914. Such influence as the intellectuals did attain was achieved only because they claimed the right to formulate public issues (often wrongly) and thus shaped or misshaped the way people looked at problems. Attracted by abstract principle, they disliked contradictions and compromises; society therefore ignored them, and "continued to live with its contradictions and to use hypocrisy as its method of diminishing friction between humans".

The intellectuals remained outsiders, alternating between arrogance and despair, and probably "influenced each other most of all". Towards the end of the period, however, a "heretic breed of intellectuals" began to emerge: the technocrats, who put action above principle and gradually dug themselves into a position of real power. But the bulk of the intellectuals could not or would not recognize the fact that history, instead of being a record of crime and folly, was really "the record of illusion and weakness, with illusion being understood to involve dreaming as well as miscalculation, and weakness being seen as including sympathy, and stemming from fear".

Zeldin would no doubt object if an old-fashioned label were to be pinned to his general interpretation. I am inclined nevertheless to use the label "conservative"—though in the Tocquevillean sense of liberal-conservative; he cites, approvingly, Tocqueville's dictum that the mores and habits of thought of a country are more important than its institutions. As he sees France during the century from 1848 to 1945, the record was not one of advancing progress at the expense of tradition; indeed there was no clear line of distinction between partisans of Movement and of Order. Many things changed very little, and change was


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not necessarily for the better. Frenchmen, being human, remained stubborn, short-sighted, and often perverse; "the quality of human behaviour" improved little between 1848 and 1945. Marxists and left-liberals will no doubt be put off by the general tone of the book, just as some historians may be bothered by the tendency to downplay chronological development, which is an important part of their stock-in-trade. Yet Zeldin makes a powerful case for his interpretation; certainly it deserves serious reflection and debate.

The book can also be read on a second level—as a series of essays packed with factual information and with shrewd and provocative insights. Part One deals with national identity, provincial peculiarities, French attitudes towards the British, the Germans, and the Americans, and (in particular detail) the functioning and the impact of various levels of the educational system. Part Two, more eclectic in content, ranges through a broad series of neglected aspects of French attitudes and practices, loosely labelled "taste": such matters as fashion, journalism, science, "happiness and humour", "eating and drinking". Part Three investigates the anxieties of Frenchmen (worry, boredom, hysteria, crime), but also a wide variety of other topics: the army, the Church and its critics, demographic trends, the development of psychology, the significance of individualism as expressed through the writings of some major novelists and moralists.

By a remarkable tour de force, the author manages to make all this hang together. It is part of Zeldin's technique to illustrate each successive topic by presenting a series of concise biographical sketches; these representative figures reinforce his thesis of infinite complexity. We are given fascinating glimpses into the lives (often stranger than fiction) of bizarre, forgotten figures such as the noted popularizer of science Camille Flammarion, who spent his honeymoon in a balloon, and the entertainer Joseph Pujol, "Le Pétomane", who farted his way to fame and fortune.

*Other notables, less forgotten but* perhaps more misunderstood, are resuscitated as complex, many-sided figures: Victor Cousin, Renan, Taine, Jules Verne, Courteline, Charcot, even Proust. Indeed, for one who wishes to read Zeldin for sheer pleasure, the book is a cornucopia of curiosa. There is Renan's father, who persuades a local saint to cure his child's fever by confronting the saint with the blacksmith armed with a red-hot iron; if you fail, says the smith, "I shall shoe you like a horse". ("The saint obeyed.") There is Philippe's restaurant during the Second Empire where eighteen dishes were served a ten-course meal from six o'clock until midnight on Saturday, then another of the same amplitude from midnight until six a.m. and still a third from then until Sunday noon. There is the army manual that as late as 1926 warned recruits never to wash their feet in water, but to use grease instead. There is the fact that French primary teachers in 1914 were the worst paid in Europe, ranking twenty-fifth in a dead heat with Montenegro.

And still he wrote, and still the wonder grew, that one small head could carry all he knew. How anyone can have stored up in only twenty years such a wealth of knowledge about France and Frenchmen is a proper cause of astonishment. Dr Zeldin has drawn upon a remarkable variety of sources, often of a kind disdained by most historians: notably long-forgotten books on everything from phrenology to the culinary arts, from furniture-making to education, from world's fair catalogues to manuals on how to be happy.

He has also digested virtually every modern monograph in print (including many written by non-historians), and has utilized a considerable number of still unpublished or even uncompleted theses (most of them from Oxford or from various French universities). Every topic is buttressed by statistical information; Zeldin has not often done the quantifying himself, but has drawn on others' work and on official reports. Opinion polls from the post-1945 period are often used also, and their findings extrapolated into the past. Considering the vast scope of his work, the number of Homeric nods is strikingly small: Louis-Philippe overthrown in 1830, Balzac's Paris shrunk to a population of 120,000, Sadowa advanced a decade to 1856, the first Olympic Games delayed till 1898.

When Zeldin published his initial volume in 1973, he made this disarming declaration: "The variety of human activity cannot be compressed into a single volume, and no individual can comprehend its totality. No one writing a general history can hope to attain the goal he set himself." Now that the task is complete, he ought to feel reassured. Richard Nixon, straying briefly from his primary concern with ethics to that of aesthetics, is supposed to have said on viewing the Great Wall of China: "Well, I'll say one thing, that's really a *great* wall." In the same spirit, one might conclude that Zeldin has produced an opus that is really magnum. *Masterpieces of the historian's art are rare in any generation. Zeldin's France belongs in* that category. It is a stunning achievement, a monument of scholarship.

# The essential Swissness

**By W. N. Medlicott**

JONATHAN STEINBERG:
**Why Switzerland?**
214pp. Cambridge University Press. £4.95.

Switzerland is unusual. Jonathan Steinberg, a lecturer in history at Cambridge but married into a large Swiss-German family, is concerned that we should know so little about the variety and exuberance of Swiss life, although he recognizes that the Swiss do not reveal themselves easily to foreigners. Switzerland he suggests is unknown because it is hard to know: eight centuries of tourism have left a mark. The question in the title is interpreted as meaning: "why is there a Switzerland at all?" But the book is not really an attempt to answer this profoundly metaphysical question; it is mainly an exposition, with many deft and witty comments, of the odder features of the Swiss success story through the ages.

The roots are found in history and even more in geography. The almost inaccessible villages and mountain valleys could defy the invader; a high protein diet, warlike sports, and the hard daily life guaranteed the physical prowess of the mountaineers and made them famous soldiers.

There was the great period of expansion, when the Swiss pikemen toppled their armoured opponents; but even when their reputation and self-esteem were shattered at Marignano in 1515 Fortress-Switzerland remained impregnable. There was a collective will to survive specifically as Swiss, which meant not only a continued resistance to feudal magnates or foreign powers, but also the tolerance of the most astonishing diversities within their own borders.

Dr Steinberg sees the essence of Swiss identity in the preservation of the smallest ethnic, linguistic, and cultural units, although he is inclined to overemphasize the uniqueness of this particularism: there was, after all, a lot of it in pre-nineteenth-century Germany. But the resulting political activities are certainly of great intricacy, with a "marvellous mosaic surface". They include the ancient assembly of free citizens in the *Landsgemeinde*, twenty-five separate and sovereign cantonal governments, elaborate provisions for referenda and proportional representation, a unique system of overlapping office-holding, and a remarkable voting pattern which has kept the four main parties in nearly perfect equilibrium since 1919.

Language, the subject of Dr Steinberg's most original chapter, reinforces the peculiarities of political practice and is also divisive without being disastrous. Of the three official and four national languages German (65 per cent of population in 1970) is generally spoken in the form of *Schweizerdütsch*, but in an astonishing number of dialects, and there are well-defined circumstances in which standard or High German is obligatory. Dialect effectively excludes foreigners, including the other Swiss. The most important linguistic minority, the French-speaking Swiss (18 per cent) do not speak in dialect and also do not speak German with any enthusiasm. They are a thrifty, Protestant population with money grounds of opposition to France, just as the Swiss Germans have to Germany; but the two elements have also their suspicions and rivalries towards each other. Between these two, Italian Switzerland (12 per cent) represents a "kind of cement, proof that a multi-national state could survive and flourish even in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries".

There is no doubt much truth in the somewhat cynical view that the main unifying factor is the participation of all Swiss, whether French, German or Italian in language, in one immensely wealthy national economy. In terms of GNP Switzerland was still per capita the richest country in the world in 1973.

And it has been rich for a very long time. Habits associated with the acquisition and management of wealth reach back continuously into the later Middle Ages. Some areas have remained relatively poor, but many have been almost continuously wealthy, and the capacity for survival as well as the mere size of Swiss fortunes has been important. Circumstances favour specialization. Dr Steinberg cites the case of St Gallen, a little town cut off by its rich abbot from its natural agricultural hinterland, which became a great commercial centre in the eighteenth century with sixty substantial mercantile houses engaged in the manufacture and sale of cotton, muslin, and embroidery. Another feature is decentralization, important in the two industries of watchmaking and textiles on which so much of nineteenth-century prosperity was based. Another is the almost complete absence of strikes.

But one is bound to ask as one reads on whether Dr Steinberg's saga of success and hard work is not a little too rosy. He is clearly pessimistic about present and future trends. The Swiss, however, appear always to have had a sense of living dangerously, one symptom in the nineteenth century being the effort to strengthen respect for Swiss neutrality by demonstrating their own exceptional contribution to international peace: "it is un-Swiss to be merely Swiss". In this connection something might indeed have been said about the Red Cross, founded by a Swiss in 1863, and other international agencies welcomed at Geneva, not forgetting the League. However, it is clear today that not only the foreigner but the Swiss themselves are less and less impressed by the traditional "self-awareness".

The book ends in fact on quite a gloomy note. There is a "Hesiotic malaise". The special chapter in Swiss economic history is over; the political structure reflects the old Switzerland, not the new. Even the gigantic resources of the Swiss banking system (there are more banks than dentists) were shaken by the exchange fluctuations and inflation of the early 1970s. The great multinational trading companies dwarf their surroundings, but in the process the Swiss economy grows more like other European economies every day. The distinctive small-holding free peasantry has gone, "the sturdy Alpine peasant has become a type of landscape gardener living off state subsidies". The old Switzerland "dissolves like the grin of the Cheshire Cat", and many of the younger Swiss "have become very excited about the fact". Traditional patriotism is waning. Youth displays a growing indifference or hostility towards the compulsory and universal military service essential to Swiss survival as a nation in arms. And it can be asked whether the old-style neutrality will even be necessary as the country grows closer to the surrounding European Economic Community.

This is a masterly little book, with much unusual information attractively displayed. Although it ends with unresolved doubts and problems *Dr Steinberg is able to offer* what is presumably intended as a small word of comfort for his Swiss friends. Changes will come; the Swiss are going to loathe them. But "the essential Swissness will remain".


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# Great Books and Interesting People

**By Anthony Quinton**

MORTIMER J. ADLER:
**Philosopher at Large**
292pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £2.50.

Mortimer Adler is best known nowadays as the most active and promotionally fertile agent of public enlightenment. Most recently he has been the director of planning of the new three-part, thirty-volume edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Before that he was the moving spirit behind the fifty-four volume series of Great Books put out by the Britannica organization and the sixth deviser of its remarkable two-volume topical index, the *Syntopicon*.

Looking a little further back, to the 1930s and 1940s, Adler will be recalled as perhaps the most noble and combative of American thomists, disciple and exponent of Maritain. *Philosopher At Large* goes further back still, to Adler's time at Columbia in the 1920s. It starts very soon before that, with Adler leaving high school before graduation to work as a copy boy for the New York *Sun*. His earlier life comes in for a little general description right at the end of the book, but like the more private parts of his existence generally is very much at the margin of his concern. Yet this book is by no means simply a history of his ideas. Getting them and working them out is less noticeable than the business of putting them across, an activity which, he now admits, he often conducted in a fashion highly unlikely to succeed.

This is a notably self-critical autobiography. Adler is harsh, if, on his own evidence, quite reasonably so, on his past excesses of brashness, aggression and presumption. "Wow", he says, "an objectionable student, in some respects perhaps obnoxious." He is also doubtful of his capacity as an autobiographer, lamenting the total failure in the late 1920s to write a promised biography of William James, he writes: "I fear that my efforts at self-characterization and self-understanding are woefully inadequate. But I am able to say about myself as human being as well as about other human beings mentioned in this narrative is skimpy, impressive and superficial."

That should not be seen as an objection to the book. It is, up to a point, true. He does not offer anything much by way of interpretation or judgment of the people he describes. But remembered context or detail often does all that is needed. When Senator William Benton acquired the *Britannica* in the early 1940s an association between him and Adler began that ended only with Benton's death four years ago. Benton suggested to Adler in conversation that he should give some royalty on the Great Books, but it never got into writing. The project, which Adler created and gave years of his life to, was a great success; nearly a million sets were sold. But all Adler got out of it was his editorial salary.

In the circumstances Adler allows himself the luxury of an anecdote, when, on being given the list of the Great Ideas, burst out, "But there's adultery?" On being told he would find it under the idea of adultery, he asked "What's it doing there?" That gives a perfectly satisfactory account of the intellectual refinement of the great entrepreneur.

The intellectuals and writers of America are sometimes held to suffer from the vastness of the continent to pass through life with little opportunity to meet others of their kind. Mortimer Adler, Manhattan-born and raised, does never suffered in that way. Interesting people have constantly crossed his path, particularly through his Great Books operations. In the line registering at Columbia in 1920, he was just behind "a thin, pale-faced, sandy-haired, sharp-featured young man", who turned out in the fullness of time to be Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas. Rexford G. Tugwell was an early Great Books colleague at Columbia, while Clifton Fadiman was a persecuting pupil in the same class as Lionel Trilling, Whittaker Chambers coming along a little later.

In Chicago, he came across Edward J. Levi (later to be the college head to emerge most creditably from the turmoil of the late 1960s and, after that, United States Attorney General) as dean of the law school, carrying out reforms in the anti-vocational spirit of Hutchins. In his Great Books class there was Kay Graham of the *Washington Post* and, as a visitor only, Lillian Gish. Later on in Chicago appear Paul Goodman and Saul Bellow.

This autobiography gives roughly equal attention to the three main segments of Adler's adult life: the Columbia period in the 1920s of turbulent individualism, the Chicago period with Hutchins in the 1930s *and 1940s and, finally, what may* be called the Boston years, for a while in San Francisco, but mainly in Chicago, since leaving academic life in 1952. Oddly enough Adler has hardly ever been employed in a philosophy department proper. At Columbia early prodigies of industriousness got him a place in the psychology department which his obstreperousness to the local philosophical establishment ensured he was stuck with. Further polemical mayhem against the pragmatist eminences of philosophy in Chicago had the effect that the best Hutchins could do was make him professor of the philosophy of law in the law school there.

Adler's two principal intellectual allegiances were established at an early stage and both by way of the teaching programme at Columbia. The first, to the notion that the basis of all serious education must be an analytically intimate knowledge of the chief written works of mankind, began with John Erskine's first General Honors class on the "classics of Western civilization" in the fall semester of 1921. The second, to Aristotle, began even earlier, at the end of Adler's first year, when F. J. E. Woodbridge, the only philosopher at Columbia Adler admitted, gave him a copy of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* as a kind of prize for a good answer about that thinker in his end-of-term examination.

It could be argued that these two commitments are not well suited to be run in harness. Aristotle, intelligibly enough, is Adler's symbol for abstract and impersonal system, the promise of a rational ordering of the whole of knowledge in dependence on a set of philosophical first principles. This side of Adler reveals itself in his compulsive making of book-lists and, at a more elevated level, in his unwavering confidence in the power of deductive reasoning from definitions to provide the solutions of all fundamental problems. That he is aware of this propensity is clear enough from the telegraphic address he once chose for himself in agreeable self-mockery: "Amoleotic, Chicago."

It is a point of view very deeply at odds with the general diffuse pragmatism of the age, itself a moderately remote consequence of Darwinism, which holds that the ideas with which we think do not copy an objective, perhaps divinely pre-established order in the world, but are instruments devised by men to cope with their circumstances, susceptible to radical change and embodying much choice and convention.

It is also hard to combine with the point of view that usually underlies the kind of dedication Adler has shown to the Great Books. For people like John Erskine or Lionel Trilling the lesson of the Great Books was the humanistic one of the variousness of mankind and of men's ideas about the world. Where Aristotle praised poetry for being more philosophical than history, they would praise it for being more historical than philosophy. The idea of a set of classical texts certainly leads itself to the kind of systematic Aristotelian teaching that is Adler's leading enthusiasm. But that is an unorthodox, secondary use to which to put the diverse riches of our literary inheritance.

Mortimer Adler's temperament ensured that his life would be tempestuous enough to be interesting to read about. Extreme, almost uncontrollable impatience soon showed itself to be a deep-seated characteristic. As a Columbia student Adler showered his teachers with long interrogatories after each of their lectures. Firmly ignoring cadet training and the swimming requirement he became an instructor without a BA or MA. He finally managed to hustle together a PhD dissertation on experimental study of music appreciation in 1929, but, he admits, "I had little or no interest in this PhD project". By the time he had planned it he was off after something else.

His impatient conviction of infallibility reached its height in the Chicago years. Robert Hutchins, with whom he had been working on the logic of the law of evidence, became president of the University of Chicago at the age of *thirty, had firm views of his own* about the need to reverse academic specialization and an almost childish disregard for the conditions needed to get them realized. He and Adler would seem to have aborted each other's headlong course: he had the glamour and the office, Adler the intellectual equipment and argumentative resolution.

At the time their collision with the often highly distinguished faculty at Chicago, which they soon succeeded in uniting against them by acts of startling imprudence, seemed to end in total disaster for them. Hutchins had his powers of appointment docked, Adler hung on at the fringe of the university, turning from academic reform to Thomism. He soon made that too hot to hold him by contributing to a festschrift for Jacques Maritain a paper arguing that Aquinas had not succeeded in proving the existence of God. There is a wistful concluding comment on the episode: "I had even failed to make any headway in changing Maritain's mind on the subject."

Since his gradual departure from the academic world between the late 1940s and early 1950s, Adler has moved about a good deal. He reports acquiring a taste for high living from a few years' service as consultant to the Ritz Office, which recruited him as a defence against *movie censorship*. He has run a philosophical research institute, played a large part at Aspen and elsewhere in seminars designed to raise the minds of business executives to higher things for a while and, above all, had a crucial influence on the Great Books and *Britannica 3* undertakings.

Clearly a great mellowing has taken place. At seventy-four Adler has slowed down to something like the pace of a rather forceful and energetic man in his early forties. Earlier in life he would have been quite unable, with the attitude of mind he had then, to report on himself with the attractively rueful amusement he shows now. In doing so he provides an enjoyable tour through some interesting regions of the intellectual scene, two great universities at turnabout phases of their histories and, after that, of the instructional side of the communications industry. In the course of running his head against various fairly stolid obstacles in a long and active career, he has managed to strike quite a number of sparks with it.


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# In our death throes

## By Alison Winton

**MICHEL RAIMOND :**
**Le Roman contemporain : Le Signe des temps**
288pp. Paris : SEDES. 63.50fr.

The fashionable title need not put the nervous Anglo-Saxon off: rather than the semiological discussion one might have expected, this is, in fact, a collection of essays whose focus is reassuringly traditional and whose style is limpid. Michel Raimond has a fine literary sensibility, and these pieces provide, in fragmented form, illuminating analyses of seven of the most important twentieth-century French novelists—Proust, Gide, Bernanos, Mauriac, Céline, Malraux and Aragon. Another volume, to follow, will deal with others of lesser stature, such as Giono and Colette; and a third is announced also.

M Raimond deals with each author in chronological order of his publications, and this proves rather unsatisfactory. His often profound insights are presented haphazardly, there being little or no attempt to provide a consistent thread of argument, either in the individual chapters or in the book as a whole. And these insights are, unfortunately, padded out with unnecessary data. Do we really still need to be told that Gide considered all his works before *Les Faux-Monnayeurs* to be "récits", not novels; or to be supplied with a biographical sketch of Bernanos; or to read, yet again, of the historical background to Malraux's *La Condition humaine*?

It is worth passing rapidly over these much-rehearsed facts to get to M Raimond's perceptions which are of real originality. At his best he chooses ways of tackling his subjects which at first seem off-beat but turn out to shed light on central problems. He is able to make fresh links between the "modernism" of Gide's early work *Paludes* and the tantalizing *Faux-Monnayeurs*; he shows the necessity for omniscient narration, attacked at intervals through most of this century, in Malraux, Bernanos and Mauriac. Malraux, using the technique to shift between actors, manages to suggest that each contributes virtually equally to an overriding, all-important drama. As for Mauriac, M Raimond ingeniously rescues him from Sartre's criticisms by asserting that, in his authorial interventions, he *chooses* to leave the realm of psychology; by announcing future developments in imprecise terms, he is giving his fiction the dignified status of a warning to the reader of "toute cette part mystérieuse de la vie", which can be sensed beyond natural circumstance or motivation.

*It would be difficult to do justice* here to all the thought-provoking comments M Raimond throws out. His catholicity enables him to treat both the right-wing Céline and the left-wing Aragon with sympathy and critical distance, and to move with ease from responsive discussions of atmosphere—say, the dreamlike quality of Bernanos's *Monsieur Quine*—to persuasive demonstrations of more general points.

The *pièce de résistance* of the book is, however, the first and longest chapter, on Proust; even here M Raimond seems unsure what audience he is addressing: there is the same tendency to consider obvious facts or lack exhaustive tenets from the most guides to Proust. But when M Raimond goes on to analyse the novel and to draw our structural pauses, and symmetrical reinforcements or reversals of key scenes, he refines one's view not merely of individual incidents but of the whole work. He shows, for example, how Charlus's temporary blindness at the end of the novel is an appropriate plight for a man once so given to staring at others, at the young men who were the objects of his desire. Similarly seeking is the observation that when the narrator loses his way in night-time Paris and eventually pays an accidental visit to Jupien's brothel, the event is preceded by the remark "Il est fait un trop long crochet": the narrator's partial "deviation" leads him to the spectacle of extreme moral depravations.

M Raimond explains his title in the introduction: the twentieth-century novel "annonce . . . par ses violentes critiques du monde moderne et ses images de l'agonie d'une société, ce que Jean Rousset appelle les Signes des Temps". In fact, there are few "literary-sociological" observations in this book apart from some discussion of the public reception of authors like Gide and Mauriac, and the minute political commentaries required by any assessment of Malraux, Céline or Aragon. However, M Raimond does exploit a thorough knowledge of nineteenth-century literature in order to draw sumulating distinctions, remarking, for instance, that the wandering of the hero through a labyrinthine large town has been one of the "beaux thèmes" of the modern novel, ever since Flaubert's *L'Education sentimentale*. Equally significant, by the end of the book another meaning of the title emerges: M Raimond has shown afresh which personal images mattered most to the best creative writers of the century, thereby indicating not the *sign*, but, as in the Biblical quotation, the *signs* of the period—multiple and, in important ways, irreducible.

# In debt to Dada

## By Robin Buss

**JACQUES ROUBAUD :**
**Autobiographie, chapitre dix**
**Poèmes avec des moments de repos en prose.**
187pp. Paris: Gallimard. 39fr.

The title which Jacques Roubaud has given to this collection of *poems interspersed with passages* of prose might appear to contravene the Trade Descriptions Act. As he points out in a note on the cover, the events which shape the book took place in the eighteen years preceding his birth and consist in the publication of works by Tristan Tzara, Pierre Reverdy, Robert Desnos, Marcel Duchamp and others; that is to say, the poems are the expression of a debt to Dada and, consequently, the evidence of the debt itself. The assiduous reader may wish to trace individual lines back to their source in *La première aventure céleste de monsieur Antipyrine*, *La lucarne ovale* and *Rrose Sélavy*, or even to determine what proportion of the whole has been found ready-made in these and other works. It would not be a particularly profitable reading, but Roubaud has never been slow to offer his readers a variety of paths through his collections. Others are suggested in the fragments of preface, notes for an "afterface" and manifestos which appear, though not necessarily in that order, at intervals in this book.

Better perhaps to accept this as an autobiography in Roubaud's sense that "les paroles d'avant la mémoire font ce qu'on en dit" and hence that all experience must find expression in language which predates it. Autobiography thus differs from biography because the writer has no external material, apart from this inherited language, to work with: Roubaud makes the quizzical discovery that, except for a birth certificate, he can find no sources for his own biography. Even though, to quote the title of the putative work to which this "Chapter" belongs, life is unique, the writer must shape his memoirs in a medium formed by others. A talent for apt quotation is consequently the nearest he can get to expressing himself.

Arrangement of language is the particular concern of poets, and Roubaud studies it both from the direction of "found poems" and from that of variations on the same basic material to explore patterns of sound or meaning. Several of the poems are grouped as series, numbered in addition to the consecutive numbering of each segment of the book, and there are passages which refuse to respect this ordering, either by crossing the division between segments or by appearing out of their place in the series. These quirks, also perhaps autobiographical in that they are the affirmation of an individual preference, offer an absorbing store of possibilities for anyone who wishes to follow up the author's assertion that "la composition de ce livre est son explication: autrement dit, l'élucidation de la composition par le livre est le livre".

However, most readers will probably be content to take on trust the existence of the book's underlying structure, finding the individual poems suggestive enough in themselves. Roubaud's strength has always been his mastery of form and readiness to seek new ways of clothing his inheritance of language. Outside this, he has certain abiding interests, notably in mathematics and the Japanese game of *go*, which also serve a formal purpose in giving an externally imposed structure to poems or groups of poems. At times, for example, in his set of proverbs in this collection, he can be funny; at others there is a less attractive element of whimsy, as in the passages where he meticulously describes the rehearsal of a train journey the day before actually making it.

The whimsy, like the concern with form, he shares with the other contributors to the book published in 1973 under the title *OuLiPo* (Ouvroir de Littérature Potentielle), though his only piece in this sometimes tedious collection was the preface to a group of poems published five years earlier. Preoccupation with structure is not necessarily a guarantee of restraint, as *OuLiPo* demonstrated, but Roubaud recognizes the value of restraint and differs from some other poets working along similar lines in avoiding most of the vicious circles which make self-conscious language-games appear so sterile to those who are merely spectators of them. It is to his credit that he can say what he intends about "le mouvement perpétuel" in two poems, which might all too easily have become a series. Because of these qualities, and because he is consistently inventive, this homage to Dada provides an important chapter—but only a chapter—in his work.


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# The politics of the press

## By Michael Palmer

**NICOLAS BRIMO :**
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190pp. Paris : Maspéro. 20fr.

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**HENRI DE GRANDMAISON :**
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270pp. Paris : Lattès. 32fr.

In the run-up to the legislative elections expected in March 1978, the media figure increasingly on the French political agenda. Not that, except for the growth in importance of the broadcasting media (especially television), the situation has changed drastically since President Giscard d'Estaing's election, or indeed since the 1965 presidential campaign. Strangely perhaps, despite incidents like the throes this July when communists invaded a newscast, it is the newspaper press that in recent months has excited the most controversy. In 1972, the closure of *Paris-Jour* provoked a debate on the survival of the daily press in the audio-visual age. Today, the feeling exists that 1978 might effect that transformation of the capitalist press unsuccessfully attempted at the Liberation, or at least remove some of the excesses that now the "pluralist" press at the advanced liberal society dear to President Giscard.

The works under review treat of individual newspapers, the provincial press, press barons, unions and journalists. They highlight the variety of factors determining relations between the press and the establishment. These factors cannot all *be modified by parliament, government* and the law-courts, the three main instruments by which respect of the spirit behind the ordinances of August 1944—which serve, *toute de mieux*, as the guide-lines for the post-war press—can be enforced. In the case of Robert Hersant, politician-based press baron extraordinary, many suggest that all three should intervene. Gilles Martinet, chief of the Socialist Party's authorities on media matters, has declared that the first task of a left-wing government will be the dismantling of the Hersant group. Both Nicolas Brimo's polemical *dossier* and Dominique Pons's well-researched study show why this should be so.

In 1940, at the age of twenty, Hersant set out to become a newspaper tycoon in the collaborationist press of Vichy France. He achieved little more than a prison sentence, the loss of his civic rights (restored in 1952 when he was unmedalled by Pinay) and an opprobrium which has intensified with his subsequent success — *le Canard Enchaîné*, M Brimo's paper, habitually refers to him as Herr Sant. In many ways Hersant's career, and the attitudes he provokes, illustrate, if only by contrast, trends within the post-war press. Thus following his eclipse in the late 1940s, Hersant achieved success with a specialist publication, *L'Auto-Journal*, geared to the nascent consumer and leisured society; subsequently he launched similar publications and so tapped one of the most profitable sectors of the French press. His own printing-works and advertising agency served his various publications, and he succeeded, in those early days of master-building, in attracting financial backing from industrialists or businessmen ranging from the communist-linked Albert Ignolin to the Gaullist Marcel Dassault, himself a (possibly rival) press magnate.

In 1958, Hersant was elected *député* in a department, l'Oise, where four years earlier he had acquired his first provincial newspaper. A provincial *député*, lacking the support of a, if not the, local baron, is awkwardly placed. Alternatively, as Hersant bluntly remarks, a parliamentary seat is an asset for a newspaper owner and businessman. Fellow *députés*, in fact, attacked him from the outset. And he subsequently proved a trimmer, moving from the opposition radicals to the government centrists during Pompidou's presidency. A master of political showbiz, Hersant applied the techniques of popular journalism to his election campaigns, and in his anti-communist crusading: this, intense since May 1968, threatens to reach a crescendo in March 1978.

Hersant's politics only partly explain why, particularly to the socialists, he is persona non grata. Journalistically, in the provinces and (since 1975) in Paris, the former Pétainist has succeeded where they have failed. In 1947 the socialists, who did well following the "transfer" of newspaper property in 1944-46 ("legalized" in 1954), controlled papers with a combined circulation of 2,246,000 : today's figure is 500,000.

There is no longer a Paris-based party daily (even if *Le Matin*, launched earlier this year, is *sympathetic to them*), and in the provinces, the story is one of decline (with Gaston Defferre's *La Provence* the outstanding exception) or of closures. In telling it, MM Pons and Brimo fail to point out that many such papers folded in the period 1947-51, i e, before Hersant entered the provincial press. But no matter; M Pons shows dramatically how, from the late 1950s, radical and socialist provincial newspapers turned for financial aid to Hersant. Some were weeklies, some dailies—already the expansion of the less overtly committed regional dailies (charted more fully in the François Archambault/Jean-François Lemoine study) was *driving the left-wing papers to the* wall. Leading socialist provincial dailies, losing ground to the dominant regional daily, turned to fellow socialist papers elsewhere. But, as in the case of the Lille-based *Nord-Matin*, bad blood between socialist leaders—Guy Mollet and Defferre, heading the three major provincial bastions of the party, the "Bouches-du-Nord"—prevented collaboration: the Mollet paper turned to Hersant.

Beginning in a small way in central France, where a vast region surrounding Limoges was served not by any one daily but by a series of independent local papers, Hersant acquired various local publications, rationalized their management and publication, and created a common news, feature and, above all, advertising organization. Allowing for local conditions, he has subsequently applied this formula to many regions in the west, centre-west, south-west, north and Normandy. In 1972, he bought a major regional daily, *Paris-Normandie*. In 1975 and 1976, Hersant acquired effective managerial control of two metropolitan dailies, the morning *Le Figaro*, widely read among the upper and middle classes, and the popular evening, *France-Soir*. Both the Paris-based papers are conservative and pretend to a national readership. Using regional as well as Parisian printing-works, photo-composition and facsimile reproduction geared to offset presses, Hersant promises to rejuvenate the provincial sides of his Paris-based dailies, to the alarm of leading regional dailies. And it is also rumoured that *Le Figaro* will become an *evening* paper to strengthen the conservative alternative to *Le Monde*, while *France-Soir* prints editions round the clock. Like its celebrated predecessor of the 1930s, *Paris-Soir*.

Emilien Amaury controlled a newspaper group long before Hersant; unlike him, he could produce Resistance as well as Pétainiste credentials. In the late 1940s, Amaury headed the Havas advertising group, and until his death last January presided over a group which included provincial as well as Parisian papers; in the post-Liberation period, in fact, his group profited from the demise of many of the provincial titles. Since *the early 1960s, in the departments* north of Paris, Amaury and Hersant publications have been locked in battle. Little love was lost between the two press barons. Yet a joint reading of the works on Hersant and on Amaury's *Parisien Libéré* emphasizes their affinities. Indeed, given their anti-communism and the no-nonsense fashion in which Amaury dealt with printing unions and Hersant with journalists, one suspects that were Hersant to fall foul of the communist-affiliated printing union, La Fédération du Livre, a dispute comparable to that at *Le Parisien Libéré* might occur. Furthermore, the drama of the conflict between employer and unions—which lasted twenty-nine months, provoked a dozen general newspaper strikes, innumerable demonstrations, acts of terrorism, a tragic death, and ended only in August of this year—has obscured the fact that one of Amaury's aims is similar to Hersant's: the regionalization of Paris-based dailies.

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that precarious, among non-specialist metropolitan dailies has been *Le Monde*. Circulations (and often advertising revenue) are in decline. Paris-based dailies have increasing difficulty in substantiating their claim to be national papers; even their suburban markets are threatened by regional dailies. Given this, *Le Parisien Libéré* undertook, in the early 1960s, to multiply its regional editions within the departments contiguous to the Seine and the Paris region. The policy was proving not unsuccessful when, in 1975, the cheaper costs of printing outside Paris led the management to a decision which finally provoked the battle with La Fédération du Livre: the transfer of production to presses outside Paris threatened the livelihood of its existing printers and compositors, to which management retorted that it would no longer accept the "closed shop" situation by which its work-force had to belong to the Fédération. With the dispute ended, management intends to proceed further with its *regionalisation policy*.

Of the three works concerning the conflict, *La Bataille de la liberté* puts the management side, and *Le Putsch d'Amaury* the views of the paper's work-force. Serge Graftieaux's study is less polemical and offers a lucid examination of the problems facing the printing unions in both Paris and the provinces. Yet on this score, as on so many others, the study by MM Archambault and Lemoine will long remain the essential reference work. The two authors' families are linked with two of the most successful regional dailies of the post-war period, yet they themselves are among those managerial technocrats who, like Jean-Louis Servan-Schreiber, have achieved prominence in the provincial press in the past fifteen years or so.

Their work retraces the history of the post-war provincial press but it is essentially contemporary; it is analytical and thematic, examining aspects such as news-flow and feature agencies, advertising revenue, marketing techniques and newspaper groups or pooled resources.

It also contains many examples and case-studies. Above all, perhaps, it succeeds in explaining the structures and forces within the press, while giving full weight to the analysis of readers' attitudes to various news-categories and magazine features. If some of the historical "flashbacks" (about the Havas agency, for instance) are misleading, the marshalling of contemporary evidence—some very recent indeed—is excellently done. As with M Pons's study, the annexes are invaluable: the bibliography is exceptionally rich. Finally, the work succeeds in relating the provincial press to the other media, and notably to the conflict between metropolitan and regional dailies.

The book on *Le Monde*, the opposition paper which the government has to read, and cultivate, is the joker in the pack. Philippe Simonnot had worked for the paper for eight years and had become its petroleum correspondent when he was dismissed in the spring of 1976. He has a reporter's flair: at a meeting of OPEC he tracked down an elusive Sheikh Yamani by following the scent of certain oriental perfumes. But, as *Le Monde* stated when reviewing M Simonnot's book, his methods of obtaining information were not always acceptable to it.

The anguished account, which *Le Monde* agrees is essentially correct, of the circumstances surrounding his dismissal centre on his publication of extracts from an admittedly stolen document, and on the attitude of the director of *Le Monde* when the then Minister of Finance asked for disciplinary measures against M Simonnot. This section of the book will perhaps primarily interest "Mondologists" and professional journalists.

But, far more successfully than Michel Legris in his recent splenetic attack on the paper's editorship (see *TLS*, June 18, 1976), M Simonnot proceeds to raise fundamental questions concerning the relationship between news-media and their sources. Two rarely explored subjects are examined: the relationship between power-wielders (present and potential) and the media; and, similarly, the *rapports de force* between *Le Monde's* own establishment—the hierarchy dominated by chief editors and the like — and the rank and file of staff correspondents. M Simonnot expresses the resentment of the specialist, well-informed about a particular story, at the changes made to his copy by his superiors; he fails to see that the latter's preoccupation with form and style reflects the belief that the end-product, the completed paper, must be more than the sum of its parts. He is very good on the plays by which the establishment seeks to "integrate" the media and individual journalists, whatever may be said about "pluralism" and "le journaliste, cet anti-pouvoir". In short, M Simonnot's book is confused but stimulating.

It has its faults: *Le Monde's* expansion to forty-eight pages owes as much to the pressure of advertising and the need to utilize fully the capacity of its modern presses as to the number of journalists vying to include their copy. M Simonnot believes that *Le Monde* publishes annually the names, functions and status of the paper's correspondents; in fact, it has done so only two or three times since 1970, and the difficulties involved in doing so illustrate the points M Simonnot himself makes. Inevitably, then, he reveals certain "détails de cuisine" of the paper in still dearly loved; as the best French—some would say the best European—daily, *Le Monde* should profit from his treatment.

M Simonnot's ideas tally with the currently fashionable notion of l'*Etat-spectacle*, whereby media events are staged by politicians and other establishment figures so as to hog the headlines—the personalization of issues corresponding to the voyeurism of the mob. From the establishment's viewpoint, the newspaper press takes second place to broadcasting. Large-circulation regional dailies, however, have a particular importance; privileged channels to "la France profonde", the provincial texture.

The various books under review pull no punches, whether the adversary is the establishment, one of the monopolies—from capitalist newspaper groups to communist printing unions—within the media. One factor perhaps is missing: the select aristocracy of journalists who have a foot in both the newspaper press and the broadcasting and other media.

Most of the books succeed, however, in isolating the various components in the flow of news and information. And, whether presented or not by the imminence of elections—Robert Hersant, for one, has been unusually forthright, in the past eighteen months, in his article explaining his political and his journalistic career and methods—the debate cannot but be enriched by the information gathered in these studies. In the Henri de Grandmaison, a journalist on what is now the biggest-selling of all French dailies, *France-Ouest-France*, felt that Hersant's career was best related in novel form. Today, the investigative journalism of Dominique Dunglas once again proves that "la réalité dépasse la fiction". The climate last exists in which publishers and journalists can print "inside" accounts of the contemporary French press.

# For Throne and Altar

## By Anthony Rhodes

**JEAN MARIA CHARLES-ROUX :**
**L'Apostasie nationale**
250pp. Paris: La Pensée Universelle. 34.30fr.

Father Charles-Roux is a French Legitimist. He regards the political ills which have afflicted his country in the past 180 years as deriving from the regicide of 1793. For him, monarchy is a divine institution. Those who overthrow it are sinners, and will bring suffering on their land. His book is a brilliantly argued plea for a return to Throne and Altar, the twin pillars of social order and well-being.

Even the most confirmed anti-monarchist will admit that the Robespierres, Hitlers and Stalins were more tyrannical than any of the descendants of Clovis, God's first Christian king anointed, on that memorable Christmas day of AD 496 in Rheims. However inadequate as rulers the Christian kings may sometimes have been, they were, according to Father Charles-Roux, better than the godless modern ones—if only because the kings, even if luke-warm in their Faith, were restrained from too great an abuse of power by the unction which flowed into them from the Christian godhead. In the words of the Conte de Maistre (Father Charles-Roux's literary ancestor): "Man in general if left to himself [i.e. without religion] is too wicked to be free."

But cannot there be—it may well be asked—a godly state *without a monarch*, under some worthy lay ruler, such as President Wilson or Mr Atlee? No one could call these men evil. No, says Father Charles-Roux, there is no apostolic succession in the lay rulers; no divine grace flows into the Atlees and Wilsons, to ensure that their successors are not monsters. "Monarchy", says Father Charles-Roux, "is the system which, ever since Saul, God has linked in the most holy way, and the closest, with the destiny of His elected people—by incarnating the nation in one human being who becomes by the holy unction of the Coronation the priest of the Lord."

Monarchy, viewed in this ethereal light, is much more than merely the apex of a social pyramid, as our republicans at Westminster view it. Their jealousy of its undoubted material wealth blinds them to its spiritual side, which is infinitely more precious. In his attitude to monarchy, Father Charles-Roux is nearer to Dante, in *De Monarchia*, than to de Maistre, in *Du Pape*. All three men agree that monarchy is a God-ordained necessity for mankind. But whereas de Maistre acknowledges the pope as omnipotent on earth, the other two contend that kings hold their titles directly from God, and are in no way subject to the papacy. This attitude may appear strange on the part of a Catholic priest; but it is further proof, if such is needed, of Father Charles-Roux's independence of mind and intellectual honesty.

The word "Apostasy" in the title of his book is defined in the *OED* as "abandonment of religious faith, vows and principles". In most of the past two centuries, says Father Charles-Roux, France has been living in this state. "As a result of losing contact, three, the anointed King, with Christ—source of all Truth and Light—a spirit of France has returned to primitive and savage condition." A strong advocate of European unity, Father Charles-Roux contends that Europe was well on the way to unity in the eighteenth century under the French monarchy. To this end in view, Louis XV wisely married his heir to a daughter of the Holy Roman Emperor (Father Charles-Roux's admiration for the Holy Roman Empire is similar to Dante's). In the process was abruptly halted by the regicide of 1793. After that France exported all over the world her "new brand of idolatry and vainglorious selfishness called nationalism". Germany under the influence detached itself from the Holy Roman Empire, degenerated into the nationalist state of Bismarck, and thence into the world of one of Hitler. Following the French "liberal" example, Italy turned her back on the Church and became nationalist. Atheist communism came to Russia in an intuitive revolution.

Whatever one may feel about Father Charles-Roux's views, everyone will envy their force. In an atheistic world, he preaches like a Reading his book is like walking through a gallery filled with the works of Francis Bacon, suddenly turning a corner and suddenly coming face to face with Piero della Francesca's *Resurrection*. His book should be translated and published in England.


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# Middlemen of the left

## By Patrick McCarthy

**JEAN-PIERRE CHEVENEMENT :**
**Les Socialistes, les Communistes et les autres**
354pp. Paris: Aubier/Montaigne. 42fr.

In *Les Socialistes, les Communistes et les autres* Jean-Pierre Chevènement describes the history of the French Communist and Socialist Parties from the 1920 Tours congress to the present and also outlines the problems which the left faces as it draws closer to power. M Chevènement writes less as a historian than as a practising politician, for he is the leader of the left-wing CERES (Centre d'Etudes, de Recherches et d'Education Socialistes) and one of the key figures in the new, surprisingly dynamic Socialist Party.

In an earlier book, *Le Vieux, la crise, le neuf* (1974), he described his own background. The son of a provincial schoolmaster, M Chevènement is yet another "boursier". If Albert Thibaudet were still alive, he would relish Chevènement's account of how he first came to Paris, knowing no one at all and not even understanding how the telephone worked. Relentlessly industrious, he went through Sciences Po, and then—significantly—the Ecole Nationale d'Administration. "Boursiers" are not necessarily men of the left, as Georges Pompidou, son of an Auvergnat schoolteacher, demonstrated. But M Chevènement disliked the sad France of the late 1950s, burdened with the Cold War and the dead hopes of the Liberation.

In particular he loathed the Algerian War. During his military service at Oran he watched the collapse of French Algeria and sided with the FLN. On his return to France he joined the Socialist Party, although it was the socialists' leader Guy Mollet who had expanded the Algerian War and sent the paratroopers into Suez. The reason which M Chevènement gives for joining such a bankrupt party is intriguing: "In France you can do nothing without tradition", he writes. The SFIO was appalling, but it existed and could be reformed.

M Chevènement founded the CERES in order to push the party away from its middle-of-the-road, pro-American stance and towards an alliance with the communists. In 1971 he triumphed: at the Epinay congress the CERES vote swung the socialists towards a new leader, François Mitterrand, and a more left-wing policy. The signing of the "Programme commun" and Mitterrand's near-successful presidential bid of 1974 followed. In the past three years the socialists have advanced still further and the CERES now controls approximately 25 per cent of the party membership. In its thinking it is rather like the *Tribune* wing of the Labour Party: broad nationalizations, a planned economy, dislike of multinational corporations and distrust of the Common Market.

There is a close connection between *Le Vieux* and *Les Socialistes*. The first book explains the left's legitimacy: France's ruling elite failed to solve the economic problems of the 1930s and collapsed in the war against Hitler. It was saved by de Gaulle, who preserved national independence in 1940 and then defended it in the 1960s against the United States. M Chevènement greatly admires de Gaulle, but criticizes him for forming an alliance with the old capitalist upper classes. Since they were not interested in independence, Gaullism could not succeed. It was duly overthrown by Giscard d'Estaing, whose social reforms are a mere façade that conceals a pro-Atlantic foreign policy and economic conservatism. Only the left, declares M Chevènement, can preserve national independence by rooting it in working-class opposition to international capitalism. In *Les Socialistes* he describes why the left has been unable to rule France. The key is the split between communists and socialists. The history of the French working-class movement since the Popular Front shows that the Left's failure to unite and its failure to incarnate the national will . . . are one and the same thing." The role of the CERES is to bind the two parties together.

M Chevènement explains how the split began at the Tours congress. One group, impressed by the Soviet revolution, formed a Leninist party, which was disciplined, devoted to Russia and dedicated to revolution; it was pure but sterile. The second group was more realistic, but it fell into the trap of social democracy and sacrificed real changes to pragmatic reforms. Each party measured itself by the other, each reinforced the other's weakness. The stress laid by the Paris Communists on the dictatorship of the proletariat plunged the socialists ever deeper into class collaboration. And vice versa: "The Socialist leaders have to betray so that the Communist Party may be saved . . . there have to be opportunists so that there can be revolutionaries." The parties were frozen in their images of themselves and each other. In the industrial towns of north-east France communists and socialists fought in the streets at election time. Leninism and social democracy were two sides of the same false coin.

Yet, maintains M Chevènement, each party held one authentic part of the left's heritage. During the Popular Front the communists were correct in stressing aid to Spain and the anti-fascist struggle; the socialists were right to demand a large extension of public ownership. But mutual animosity undermined both projects. At the Liberation the PC distrusted the United States, and the socialists distrusted the Soviet Union. The Cold War proved that both sides were right but their quarrel in 1947 drove the communists into the ghetto and the socialists into colonial wars. Neither could act without the other and in 1958 the left was unable to prevent de Gaulle's return.

Historians might argue with this analysis. They might say, for example, that the PC's call for an anti-fascist crusade came less from a desire to protect the French working class than from slavish obedience to Stalin's foreign policy. M Chevènement is hard on his own party, probably because he has such vivid memories of the Mollet years. As a politician he has drawn from his researches the conclusion that "without the PC, the PS will betray". Centrist coalitions are anathema to the CERES, which knows that, if the left wins next year, Giscard will try to split the socialists and the communists once again. The CERES suspects that some men in the Mitterrand wing of the party, which is republican rather than socialist, and some older party members of Mollet's generation, like Gaston Defferre, might secretly be pleased at this. M Chevènement is combating such heresies in advance. The CERES has a Leninist strain and it wants the socialists to be tough.

Conversely M Chevènement encourages the communists to become less theological and more practical, to give up the sacred cows of democratic centralism and devotion to Russia. He reminds them that the union of the left has enabled them to emerge from the ghetto—"without the PS, the PC can do nothing". He congratulates them on the progress they have made in recent years. Once more he may be too kind to the communists. He imagines that they still possess a revolutionary soul, but in fact the PC with its passion for ideology, its authoritarianism and its reluctance to think for itself, may well be the most conservative of parties. Its dislike of autogestion and of modern economic planning, as well as its cult of small farmers, seem to indicate this. Still, M Chevènement's view is that a more flexible PC and a tougher Socialist party will be able, this time, to create a successful Popular Front. By a paradox implicit in his argument, the CERES is distrusted by both sides. Many socialists feel that its pro-communist stance antagonizes moderate voters and at the recent Nantes congress Mitterrand fought hard against M Chevènement's policies. Meanwhile the communists know that, if they are to grow, it must be at the expense of the CERES; so they watch for opportunities to denounce their rivals as social democrats.

M Chevènement's book provides the background to the present quarrel between the two parties. By demanding more nationalization the communists are stressing their ideological purity and showing their distrust of their reformist allies. There are, of course, other reasons. As the socialists have advanced, the communists have declined, so Georges Marchais needs an opportunity to assert his party's identity. He also needs to show his militants, who distrust his moderate line, that he is not selling out. Since the PC's strength lies in the approximately 10,000 militants who do the arduous work of organizing, this may be the most important reason of all. But it leads back to M Chevènement's theme: the communists are still showing Lenin's concept for social democrats and they are still, as the CERES has been pointing out in recent weeks, driving the socialists towards the centre. Indeed, some socialists have begun hinting that they might dispense with the communist alliance, a prospect which greatly displeases the CERES.

The dispute contains much game playing and yet words are not lightly spoken, especially by men who will have to govern together. M Chevènement is worried about the strength of the union because he foresees grave difficulties when the left comes to power. He does not think it will be possible to conciliate French businessmen or international bankers. He calls for rapid nationalization accompanied by autogestion and for control over credit and imports. Such a break with the capitalist economy will only be possible if the left is united and strong. M Chevènement knows that the Popular Front failed because it did not take bold economic measures in the first few months. He is also haunted by the memory of Portugal, where the revolution collapsed because the left was divided—Soares has joined Mollet in his gallery of social democratic villains.

The insistence on strong government leads back to M Chevènement's peculiar Gaullism. "Rassembler" is a key term in *Les Socialistes*, which also contains other Gaullist phrases such as "national will" and "moment of destiny". They clash with the Marxist language and yet they are not fortuitous. Like de Gaulle, Chevènement believes that national independence is still possible. Throughout Europe the left is becoming the strongest defender of the nation-state. Internationalism, so long a left-wing motif, has changed camps; it is now associated with multinational corporations and the capitalistic EEC. The CERES fought hard against direct elections to the European parliament, which makes for another link with the *Tribune* group. Since M Chevènement is a man of tradition, it is worth remembering, too, that the French left has always had a nationalist strand, which goes right back to the wars of the First Republic. M Chevènement also shares de Gaulle's view that France should maintain an independent nuclear deterrent. He repeats the Gaullist argument that the United States would not risk nuclear war to protect Europe, would not sacrifice New York to save Paris. But the tie between M Chevènement and de Gaulle goes even deeper. A true product of the ENA, M Chevènement has a sense of the state. Like de Gaulle, he is proud that the French state is powerful and well-organized. The left will use it to break with capitalism and unite the French people around a socialist project which combines autogestion at home with independence abroad.

*Les Socialistes* concludes with this two-fold vision of freedom, but one is not quite convinced. There seems to be a contradiction between the loosening of the state implicit in autogestion and M Chevènement's great theme of strength. This tension runs through the CERES itself, which tries to be as disciplined as a Roman legion and yet to allow its policy to be shaped at the grass roots. Yet M Chevènement is right to maintain that a synthesis is needed in France. The demand to participate in governmental decisions—in the field of nuclear policy, for example—is accompanied by an opposite feeling that Giscard is letting the country drift aimlessly through the economic crisis. The left will have to be tough as well as flexible, traditional as well innovative, Gaullist as well as "autogestionnaire".

*Les Socialistes* is not as readable a book as *Le Vieux*. It is more political and less personal and M Chevènement, the schoolmaster's son, tries too hard to convince. The uninitiated reader may flounder and sink amid the long discussions of Gramsci, Bernstein and Rosa Luxemburg. But *Les Socialistes* is an excellent, if sometimes oblique, guide to French politics in this important pre-election year.

The Parisian quarterly *Tel Quel* is not what it was, nor ideologically speaking, where it was. The bumper Autumn 1977 issue, which is actually three issues in one, is given over to the Chinese and to the feelings held about that country by such seasoned *Tel-Quel*-lers as Philippe Sollers and Julia Kristeva. In answer to the leading question "Pourquoi les Etats-Unis?", Kristeva declares that Europe is, if not finished, then "predictable", that she has tried China and found it wanting, being just a fresh version of the old Stalinistic model, and that she has now turned to the United States to see if it might offer a way out of the impasse of the West. Such courtesy and openness would not have been found in *Tel-Quel* a few years ago; it will be interesting to see where it leads. The Autumn number has 304 pages and costs 49 francs.


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Edited by Michel Décaudin
1,518pp. Paris: Gallimard. 125 fr.

The burgeoning interest in Apollinaire during the past twenty years has been devoted mainly to his poetry and art criticism rather than his other works in prose. And yet contemporaries thought highly of his short stories. *L'Hérésiarque et Cie* nearly won the Prix Goncourt in 1910, André Breton considered "Que vlo vé" to be the source of "surnaturalisme", and Apollinaire himself, as Michel Décaudin in the preface to this admirable first volume of the collected *Oeuvres en prose* reminds us, believed that he had a "grand talent de conteur" as well as a "grand talent de poète". (I was once shown by Tristan Tzara an unpublished letter from Apollinaire, in which he said that the short story was his great speciality.)

M Décaudin attributes this critical top-sidedness to the unavailability of the texts, to faulty editions and the lack of necessary background material, a large part of which has now seen the light of day since the death of the poet's widow Jacqueline. It is certainly true that much recent French criticism, with its stress on themes and the "structures de l'imaginaire", has concerned itself with Apollinaire's work as a whole, underlining the obsessive themes and images that criss-cross through stories and poems, articles and letters. In this way many of the most cryptic references in the poems themselves have come into focus, and new interpretations have been made possible.

It is also true that, more than most writers, Apollinaire seems to make no conscious division between prose and poetry. The particular poetic quality of his prose meant that he could transcribe word for word an earlier short story and print it as the poem "La Maison des morts". Stories are poems, poems are letters and letters pour out in verse—even his occasional journalism takes flight into lyricism. From the thematic point of view prose and poetry are one. Sometimes, however, one wishes more emphasis could be placed on pinpointing the variables rather than the constants, on discovering what makes the poem different from the story, what gives a particular confrontation of images its unique spark, what endows the individual work with its specificity.

For the student of Apollinaire this is an invaluable collection. What only the most devoted scholar was prepared to decipher from the chaotic manuscripts of the Bibliothèque Doucet and the Bibliothèque Nationale, the "ébauches", the fragments, the unpublished stories, and plays and even the scenario for a film, are now made available, along with *L'Enchanteur pourrissant*, *L'Hérésiarque et Cie*, *Le Poète assassiné*, *La Femme assise* and the mildly erotic compilations *La Fin de Babylone* and *Les trois Don Juan*, works which have not been readily accessible before. All of this will give some idea of the diversity, fertility and range of Apollinaire's interests and ideas, a range which will become even more evident when the second Pléiade volume—containing among other things his more substantial articles—appears.

M Décaudin is an unfailingly erudite guide. He explains the different stages of the genesis of each work from manuscript to proof copies to first publication, supplies us with all the significant variants, and sheds light on the hundreds of recondite references from sources as diverse as the Kryptadia, histories of the Mormons, the Bible, erotic literature, or the Kabbala.

All of this splendidly detailed elucidation makes the work indispensable for the specialist. What though does it offer to the more general reader? One remembers, for instance, the comparative lack of success of the Brussels company which four years ago put on a stage version here of *L'Enchanteur pourrissant*, and the adverse criticism in the English press, which was directed more against the work itself, a strange hybrid with its mixture of legend, fairy tale and abstruse symbolism, than against its ingenious staging. It is certainly quite out of fashion today, attractive perhaps only to the collector of curiosities or to the scholar tracking down an early appearance of major themes. Again, *La Femme assise*, an unginnly work patched together, as Apollinaire admitted, in haste, is not likely to produce more than a fleeting interest in its highly-coloured episodes of Mormon history. Even the two erotic works will be disappointing to anyone who has had his appetite whetted by the cruder and more overtly pornographic *Les onze mille verges* and *Les Exploits d'un jeune Don Juan*.

The fact is that Apollinaire was no novelist, or least in the traditional sense, nor did he think that the traditional novel-form had much life left in it. He lacked any talent for putting himself inside the skin of a character, or for playing out in a psychological sense. It is as if, in doing so, he can discover only himself and his own obsessions, and, moved though he is to explore and exorcize his interior dramas, he is also, like many poets, equally shy of baring his heart to public gaze. Most of the corrections of both poems and stories move in the direction of covering up over-revealing admissions. What he is attracted by in other people is the external detail, the bizarre oddity, whatever will set his imagination wandering through the maze of memory, anecdote, and snatches from old books. In the unfinished but gripping story "La Dame blanche des Hohenzollern" of 1917-18, he sees in a train a mysterious lady with violet eyes and a scar on her neck: "Et aussitôt mon imagination d'entrer en jeu et de bâtir compagne à propos de cette o[illegible]trice."

It is clear that this random movement of the imagination does not lend itself easily to the rigour of sustaining over a period all the threads of a long intrigue. Within the confines of the short story, however, where he is obliged to concentrate on a single anecdote, Apollinaire can, at his best, work wonders of condensation and economy, following the story-line with speed and verve, maintaining suspense, as well as suggesting a wealth of local colour and setting, the *fait divers* in a mythical frame work. "Que vlo-vé" with its highly original mixture of lyricism and the local lore of the Ardennes, sadism and eroticism, *Les Pélerins piémontais* with the tense atmosphere of the pilgrim church, the dying girl and the blasphemous imprecation of her monk-lover, *Le Passant de Prague* which mixes the real atmosphere of Prague with the legendary appearance of the wandering Jew, are all masterpieces of the genre. Critics are right to think of Hoffman and Poe, of Villiers, l'Isle Adam and Barbey d'Aurevilly.

M Décaudin underlines very appropriately in these stories—as indeed in Apollinaire's writing generally—the basic "ligne de force" which consists of the play between the false and the true, between dream and reality. To this opposition I would add other terms: love and death (most of the stories end with a death), flesh and spirit (nothing human is to be alien to this inquiring mind), idolatry and blasphemy, and the corresponding registers of lyricism and irony.

For the modern reader perhaps the most interesting story is *Le Poète assassiné*. This uneven, accountable work combines the real and the false, lyricism and satire, autobiography and myth. New or old? Successor to Rabelais, precursor of surrealism, or something even newer, situated in the future? In it one sees Apollinaire at his familiar tricks of composition, what M Décaudin calls "le patchwork". Indeed the manuscripts present a curious appearance, being cobbled together from handwritten fragments of different periods with different names for the hero scored over, passages pasted on or cut out, printed articles which have already appeared in short a real collage. What emerges from this distillation of high spirits and ironical malice closely is the myth of the poet, redolent with archetypal symbols and prophecies of persecution by scientist, mob, and woman; and, most modern feature of all, the story-line is actually generated by sheer joy in punning and wordplay.

Although there is no question of Apollinaire's "talent de conteur" suddenly taking over from his reputation as a poet, anyone who fascinated by the poetry will for much to delight and astonish in this rich, disparate collection.

# Only disconnect

**By Rex Last**

**KURT SCHWITTERS:**
**Das literarische Prosa 1931-1948**
Volume 3
Edited by Friedhelm Lach
336pp. Cologne: DuMont-Schauberg. DM 59.

"Once upon a time, there was a good man who enjoyed his life. A flea came flying along and settled on his hand to drink his blood." The good man permits the flea to bite; the word gets around among the genus of *pulex irritans*; and the air becomes thick with bloodthirsty fleas. "And they bit him and bit him and drank and drank and they were never satisfied, because there were too many of them. But the good man died."

This Fable of the Good Man, dated 1933, typifies this volume of Schwitter's later prose which now emerges for the first time on to the printed page: it confirms the suspicion that in the last two decades of his life he was producing very much the mixture as before (despite the extravagant claims of profundity and artistic development put forward by Friedhelm Lach, the editor): it has the same deceptive promise of some eternal truth lurking beneath the naive surface; it underlines again the limitations of Schwitter's imaginative range (the Fairytale motif recurs time and again under various guises); and it demonstrates the strange, hermetic, private world that Schwitters inhabited—the temptation is strong indeed to send this volume to the psychoanalyst rather than the literary reviewer.

In one passage, Schwitters stresses the key role of "composition" in relation to his *Merzkunst*, collages constituted of objects discarded by materialist society—bus tickets, fragments of wood and cloth, parts of newspapers and posters, as well as many other less savoury items. These he would hopefully seek to fuse into a new and meaningful synthesis, although for the most part they have remained obstinately drab, rubbish-like and unfused. The same holds good for the items in this volume, some such biographical, mostly narrative: they are irritatingly bitty and lacking concentration, and wander arbitrarily from fantasy to reality and back again. Schwitters picks up unconsidered trifles and half-thought ideas, toys with them for a while, and then discards them leaving them just as "uncomposed" as he found them.

Most of the passages are short, some fragmentary, penned in the familiar Schwitters style with its unconplicated structure, simple word-plays and a narrow range of vocabulary. There are also a number of pieces written in indifferent O-level English during his exile in England. These later prose pieces diminish the moderate stature Schwitters the writer established in the first two volumes of his literary work (Volume 1 reviewed in *TLS* October 5, 1973; Volume 2 reviewed February 28, 1975), as the juggernaut rolls on, and there are two more volumes yet to come.





# The two halves of Heine

**By T. J. Reed**

**HEINRICH HEINE:**
**Sämtliche Werke: Düsseldorfer Ausgabe**
General Editor: Manfred Windfuhr
Volume 1: *Buch der Lieder*, Part 1, Text; Part 2, Apparat. Edited by Pierre Grappin
1,305pp. Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe. DM 96.

**Säkularausgabe**
Volumes 20-23 and 27
Edited by Fritz H. Eisner, Fritz Mende, Christa Stöcker and Winfred Woesler
East Berlin: Akademie
Paris: Editions du CRNS

The second instalment of the Düsseldorf Heine edition brings the *Buch der Lieder*, the work by which Heine came to be best known. It is generously laid out in two part-volumes, one for text and one for editorial matter. The second also contains the general editor's statement of the principles governing the whole edition. Against a suspicion of "historical-critical" elaboration, Manfred Windfuhr argues a sensible case for exhaustiveness. What was urged in a *TLS* review (January 25, 1974) of the first instalment of the Düsseldorfer Ausgabe, specifically against the declared intentions of the rival Weimar Säkularausgabe, is put crisply here: "Not the editor but only the eventual user has the right to select." That the resultant mass can be presented clearly is shown by these volumes.

No space, expense or refinement of layout has been spared to make things manageable for the user. The first part of Volume 1 prints in full the first published form of each poem on the left-hand page and Heine's final revision (the fifth edition of the *Buch der Lieder*) on the right. Given the large amount of text that Heine never altered, this is in itself a considerable luxury. All other manuscript and printed variants are set out in the second part of Volume 1; where necessary they are annotated as such separately from the poem itself, elucidations of which follow in each case an account of its genesis and transmission. Each subsection of the whole book has its own substantial introduction. Ampler treatment is hardly conceivable.

Pierre Grappin has drawn on older, known materials and on others made available by the recent intense activity of Heine research (the enlarged correspondence; Michael Werner's expansion of the Houben *Gespräche* into the view *Begegnungen mit Heine*; the criticisms by contemporaries, to which the current German vogue for questions of *Rezeption* has directed attention) and has synthesized them into an impressive result. No one working on Heine's poetry in future will be able—or will want—to do without the materials here brought together and lucidly set out. For all its backing of teamwork and its modern refinements of technique, this is historical-critical editing in the grand old manner.

Sometimes, it must be admitted, this verges pleasantly on self-parody. To know who *Helmkehr* xiv is about, we find ourselves inquiring whether oysters were available inland at Lüneburg in the 1820s. More important, old "sources and influences" are rehearsed, "old" not just in years but in the whole conception of poetry and of scholarly understanding that they imply. For "Der Tod, das ist die kühle Nacht", 1905 scholarship called on Byron to explain how the bird got into the tree—only to admire, in a perfect example of self-destruct academic argument, the poet's felicitous transformation of the "borrowed" motif. For "Mein Kind, wir waren Kinder", 1908 pointed back to some lines in the medieval "Wilder Alexander" poem; and for "Ein Jüngling liebt ein Mädchen", 1898—Max Müller, no less—pursued sources in Indian apophthegms. Tolerantly, Professor Grappin reprints the Byron stanza, comments neutrally that Heine's reading of the "Wilder Alexander" cannot be established; notes in an equally unbarbed tone that the particular boy-girl situation is not just ancient Indian, but also what happened to Heine. These are period pieces indeed, bringing with them unwanted whiffs of the musty study and heavy leather-bound volumes, ironic echoes of Yeats's scholars.

In other places, too, the long arm of historical-critical tradition reaches out and pushes us in directions we may not wish to follow. The poem "Anfangs wollt ich fast verzagen" was first published under the heading "An Carl von U. ins Stammbuch". We now learn that Gustav Friedrich (not Carl) von Unzer was a schoolfellow of Heine's who received severe wounds at Waterloo. The sufferings and failure of courage the poem records were thus, it is suggested, originally his. The editor comments that this gives the poem a perspective hidden by its later use in the *Buch der Lieder*, although in that context Heine has "admittedly" changed the level of meaning by removing the original superscription and integrating the poem in a sub-cycle of uniformly first-person "Lieder" about the poet's own experiences.

Leaving aside any doubts about this basic story (how close was Heine to the sufferings of a man whose name he couldn't remember? was he really writing a *Rollengedicht* as if in the person of Unzer? was he not perhaps already the poet immersed in his own troubles?) one is bothered by that conceptive "admittedly". It seems to contrast the "real" meaning of the original poem with its cyclic use, to be flagging the historical find and half-apologizing that in the final poetic context it has been overlaid. Yet if we take out the "admittedly", what is left is a sequence—occasion, empathy, creation, emotional appropriation, cyclic integration—which moves consistently towards the final text without suggesting that our attention and allegiance should hang on to a contrary "reality". (As Heine himself said of the whole collection, the bouquet is more than the flowers—something which can be ideally studied in the versions this edition sets so clearly before us of, say, "Im Rhein, im schönen Strome" and "Die alten, bösen Lieder".) Of course, a critical edition is bound to be concerned with fact—even establishing a correct text presupposes that literature has a basis in fact and is not some floating "order of words"—but it must guard against perpetuating the old mistaken opposition of facts and fictions. It must arrange the facts as a magnet does iron filings, so that they are patterned to point towards the finished text.

Is it a quibble to make so much of one interpolated editorial word? It is meant less as a criticism than as an illustration of how hard it is to keep a constant vision of the poetic object while exploring the paths that led up to it. This does not, emphatically, entail simply adding to the editor's working tools the "immanent" method, or New-Critical analysis, which has come and gone in German studies since the great early editors did their work. This may be helpful in a modest way, or it may give a mere illusion of new cogency in settling old problems. For instance, this edition questions Heine's well-known claim to have written "Die Grenadiere", precociously, at the age of fifteen or sixteen and suggests a date 1819 or 1820. One argument offered is the "immanent" one. Yet when this is spelt out in a reference to the poem's "lucid organization and epic dynamism", it is evident that the question is simply being begged: instead of saying "he didn't write the poem that young" we say, "he can't have created those qualities of the poem that young". The one plausibly objective internal feature referred to, the "eschewing of literary reminiscences", is oddly contradicted on the next page when the line "Was schert mich Weib, was schert mich Kind?" is related, as it was by Walzel, to the border-ballad "Edward" which Heine knew in Herder's translation. This is an unhappy mixture of new and old methods, to dubious effect.

Perhaps a deliberately "modern" toughness is at work in the dating of "Die Grenadiere" and "Belsatzar": an effort has been made not to swallow the simple story of the boy-balladeer writing two of the finest poems in the German language. In a sense it hardly matters, since to write them at twenty is an absolute achievement not much improved on by writing them at sixteen. Still, very properly a critical edition must get it as right as can be. And it does matter in our total model of the poet to know how far back his mastery of the language for certain purposes reaches, what achievements were already behind him when he struggled to regain the primal simplicity of language of which ballad was a classic example.

The argument on "Belsatzar" is less impressionistic. It rests on the sort of find that can easily undermine legend and persuade us of the more banal realities; presumably it was turned up by the team of research assistants who have been combing through contemporary journals for possible Heine references. In 1820 a Rhineland newspaper which we know Heine regularly read published a *review of a translation of Byron's Hebrew Melodies*, and quoted the "Vision of Belshazzar" as a sample. "The by no means brilliant translation", we are told, "will probably have stimulated Heine to make something more of the theme." How does this compare with Heine's account?

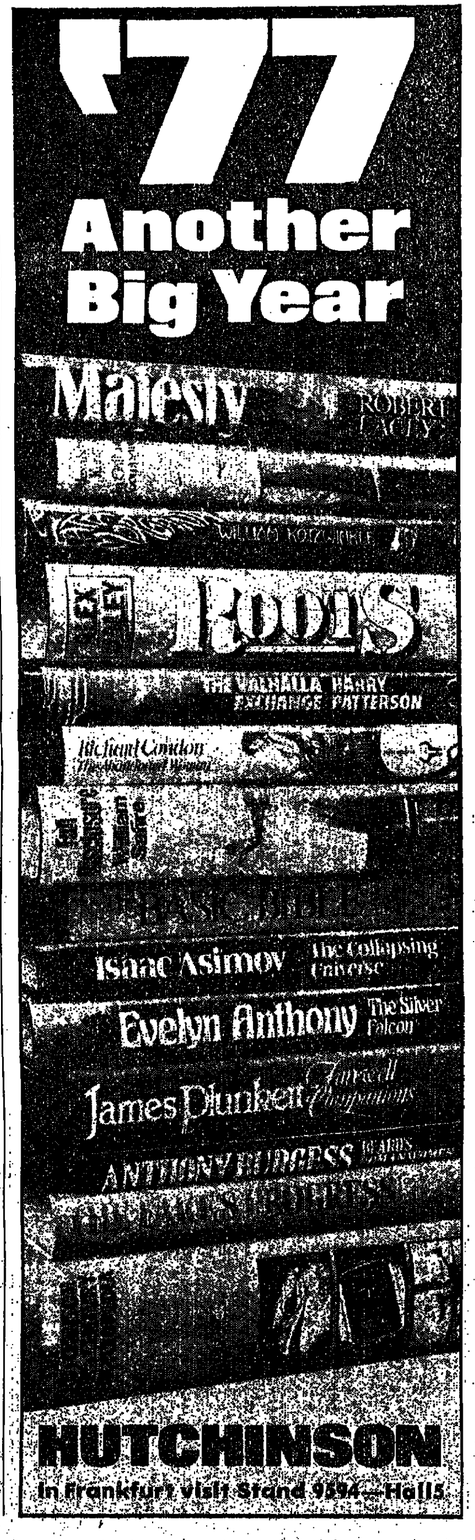
He told Ludwig Kalisch that he wrote "Belsatzar" before he was sixteen and that he was inspired by the Jewish Passover hymn "Wajehi bachazi halajlah", a celebration of various events which, as the refrain says, "came to pass in the middle of the night". It is true Heine was not in general learned in Jewish matters; he misquotes the Hebrew, and for much of his knowledge of Hebrew legend he was indebted (as Kalisch mentions) to Leopold Zunz, whom he met in Berlin in 1822. But these are not prima facie reasons for doubting his account. Professor Grappin feels able however to urge fairly firmly that the poem was written in 1820 "not as a result of discussions with Zunz" (which is not what the source says, for that would actually have contradicted what was being reported—a strange confusion here) but because of the sample in the review of the translation from Byron. Was that occasion so important, or so necessary to a Jewish poet in an age when myth and legend were in literary demand? Isn't disproportionate weight being given to a chance fact?

Here, surely, "immanent" argument can help. Not just by pointing out that Heine's poem is different and superior to Byron's at every point, for that was allegedly what Heine was striving to make it. But it is noticeable that neither Byron nor Daniel v, where the full tale is told, make anything of the midnight motif. Heine opens emphatically with it: "Die Mitternacht zog näher schon . . ." This is in tune with his account of his inspiration; it may not prove his dating accurate, but it reduces our reasons for doubting his word—which, incidentally, Professor Windfuhr describes as in general reliable.

It is not clear then that matters of dating are settled as convincingly in these famous instances as is promised when the general editor refers to previous datings as "dilettante". A sceptical attitude and a preference for leained fact over coherent "legend" are not in themselves enough to guarantee an advance.

Even more delicate is the question of interpretation. Again, the general editor declares a position: the scholarly editor must stop short of interpretative comment. Perhaps in an ideally divisible world he should, but in practice it is impossible. Even the choice of what facts to give, what moulds to gloss, what parallels—within Heine's text, and in literature at large—to cross-refer to, is bound to create emphases and thus shape each poem as it will be read by a receptive user of this edition. In the area of parallels with other Romantic writers, Professor Grappin has done much valuable work, and helped to create—as, in a different way, Jost Hermand did for the early *Reisebilder* in Volume 6—the world in which Heine moved.

Internal cross-referencing within a cycle so concentrated and coherent as the *Buch der Lieder* is

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# Showing and shaping

**By Peter Labanyi**

**DIETER WELLERSHOFF:**
**Die Auflösung des Kunstbegriffs**
141pp. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp. DM 6.

*When, just over a decade ago,* German writers were trying more and more frantically to overcome their social isolation, one of the most attractive (not least because ideologically respectable) solutions was to borrow, or with the aid of a tape-recorder generate, authentic slabs of linguistic reality. The bewildering variations in the practice of documentary literature (authorial participation ranging from modestly "editing" someone else's texts to intricately assembling "*found*" *and home-grown elements*) may explain why analysis has been less than conclusive. Setting documentary writing in a wider aesthetic and social context looks a promising approach, even though the scope of the lectures from which Dieter Wellershoff's book derives outgrew this original aim.

*As the title suggests, Die Auflösung des Kunstbegriffs* examines "similar developments" in all the arts. Duchamp's ready-mades, Warhol's films, Cage's music, the Living Theater—all represent attempts to break down the barriers between art and life, artist and public. Wellershoff distinguishes two strands: *a ceaseless expansion of what is fit* subject-matter; the substitution of technical reproduction—or "the mere annexation of found reality"—for traditional artistic labour. But he recognizes that this retreat from shaping to showing endangers the artist's critical role and can lead to a "capitulation of art before *reality*".

That documentary literature has traditionally been motivated by anything but such quiescence lays bare the perversity of viewing it within the depoliticising perspective of the neo-Dadaist avant-garde, by which Wellershoff seems to have been bewitched (there are more *fruitful analogies with photo*-montage and, obviously, cinema and television). When Werthe reproduces a soup-can, his lesson is essentially an aesthetic one ("All is pretty"), which is grasped only if we are familiar with the norms he is affronting. But no knowledge of poetics is necessary to appreciate the interviews of Erika Runge, herself a television film-maker, with the inhabitants of a mining town in the Ruhr during the 1966-67 recession. There are problems here, as Wellershoff realizes—was Runge "exploiting" her subjects for consumption by intellectuals? Was she merely recording their false consciousness, when she should have been emanci*pating them from it?* — but *Bottroper Protokolle* aimed to shock only in the sense of moral outrage. That it caused a *literary* stir seems secondary, and can partly be put down to the marketing device of a provocative foreword by a distinguished novelist, Martin Walser.

In any case, as Wellershoff rightly observes, the crisis of literature has become "institutionalized", a part of any self-respecting writer's equipment. Changes in social situation and conditions of production have ensured that the writer's "doubts about his competency", already growing since at least the middle of the nineteenth century, have assumed more and more virulent forms. During the 1960s in Germany these culminated in the turn to documentary modes *and to political journalism.* As an old-fashioned novelist himself, Wellershoff cannot be blamed for seeming less than enthusiastic about such extremist tendencies, but his account does not go as very far. Not only is his notion of "documentary" the excessively narrow one of "reproduction"—its satirical variants, for instance, are ignored—his attempt to distinguish between it and the practice of the social scientist leaves many questions begged. After a routinely grim *picture of the various economic and* ideological imperatives harrying literature, Wellershoff tosses responsibility firmly back to the individual: "in the long run, literature will come into being only if it is expected", only if writers themselves regard it as a "valid and significant activity".

The last two chapters return to Wellershoff's broader theme. The first looks at how contemporary aesthetics has been struggling to keep up with changes in art and summarizes a number of competing positions. The final chapter is more ambitious, if not hubristic, as it tries to relate artistic *developments* to global changes in society. Not surprisingly, Wellershoff barely gets beyond deft paraphrase of a clutch of social theorists and a reiteration of his familiar definition of art as "utopian proving ground". This enables him rather blandly to conclude that the permanent rebellion and "eruption" of art "corresponds to the general tendency to throw off the burden of culture, to the desire for more freedom, *more sensibility, more* pleasure, more spontaneity". But Wellershoff warns that the conquest of material scarcity upon which such impulses depend seems today increasingly like a "brief, illusory interlude", after which "other legitimations" for art will again have to be found.

To back up this reading, there are two references. One is to the similar dialogue in Goethe's "Erlkönig", where the father removes the son's fantastic imaginings". Yet at the end of Goethe's ghostly ride, the child is dead in his father's arms. Whose view of things is undone? The other reference is to an 1821 letter by Straube, which is to be sure resolutely anti-Romantic, debunking a love scene in which Heine has played an untriumphant role: But a letter is not a *poem*: it is arguable one tack on the poet's zigzag course towards a distant truth whereas the poem gives a "false picture of that erratic navigation. Tellingly, too, the letter casts Heine in the role of Don Quixote ("Towards midnight I made my way to the house of Dulcinea"), reminding one of the many places where he uses the Don and Sancho as archetypes of idealism and cynicism, with a shifting valuation as who was really right.

After just 150 years now of fame and favour, Heine's first collection is still so rich in ambiguities and uncertainties, bluffs, double and treble-bluffs, that *no editor* could perform Professor Grappin's immense and taxing task without raising a host of disputes. To attribute them will only appear unjustified to those who imagine that textual editing is the tidying of a vegetable garden rather than the making out of a field of battle. Professor Grappin has opened the full vista rain to view in its broadest sweep and its minutest detail. The great Heine project takes welcome shape. What is more, and here it is a *pleasure to record a lessening of* conflict, the Weimar Säkularausgabe is being accepted and used almost as if it were part of one undertaking rather than a rival enterprise: its now complete edition of Heine's correspondence, four volumes of his letters, two of letters to him, is amply referred to in the Düsseldorfer Ausgabe, which itself will include no letters. The Weimar commentary volumes are well advanced in this area, though not in that of the works. Crisply tabulated and easily assimilable information on each letter replaces the miniature biographical essays which are the form of annotation in Hirth's old edition; and the new volumes contain numerous letters Hirth did not have. There is much for Heine's readers to digest, and Heine, who complained so bitterly about publishers and never saw the collected edition he would have liked, is on the way to being as well served as any writer in German literature.

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Volkmar Hansen's *Thomas Mann/Heine-Rezeption* (331pp. Hamburg: Hoffman und Campe. DM 48) is a *thorough analysis of the actual and* conjectural connections between the earlier ironist and the later. Like most such studies, it tends to write its subject disproportionately large within the spiritual economy of the "influenced" author; but, allowing for that, a solid core of relevant remains, established by careful scholarship.

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The dtv/Niemeyer Deutsche Texte now includes *Heine in Deutschland* (176pp. DM 9.80), a collected documents of reactions to Heine dating from 1834 to 1956 and ranging from the sympathies of Jung Deutschland contemporaries to the hostility of Treitschke and Bartels and the critical verve of Kraus and Adorno. Manfred Windfuhr's general study of the post *Heinrich Heine's Revolution und Relexion*, is now issued (available in a revised second edition (310pp. Stuttgart: Metzler).

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As Wolfram Schütte reminds us in his fine introductory essay to *Herzog/Kluge/Strauß*, by Ulla Gregor and others (256 pp. Munich: Hanser, DM16.80), the current German "film boom" occurred despite the Federal Republic's film industry. The result is an intensely individualistic *auteur* cinema, with directors hawking for patrons rather like strolling players; their mode of production is pre-industrial; their works are often stamped by craftsmanship, also by a dilettantism forced on them by lack of money. It would be hard to find a greater contrast than the trio singled out in this volume: Werner Herzog's exploitfilist explorations, which Peter Schütte recall Cantos; Alexander Kluge's sardonic-poetic dissection of German society; *Tony Marshall*; Straub's purist, "full-scale" slaught on the film industry, "making and seeing".



# The five sons of Ullstein

**By Eric Roll**

*The German publishing firm of* Ullstein is this year celebrating its centenary. Last year another great German house, the S. Fischer Verlag, celebrated its ninetieth anniversary. It is appropriate to mention them together, not only because they have both been, in their different ways, pillars of German publishing, but because of the common origins of their founders, and—because of these common origins—their similar fate. They also have a common historian. In 1959, *Peter de Mendelssohn published Zeitungsstadt Berlin*, a history of newspaper and periodical publishing in Berlin which, inevitably, was to a large extent a history of *the firm of Ullstein*. In *1970, he* published *S. Fischer und sein Verlag*, a history of that firm up to the death of its founder in 1934.

In that remarkable book Peter de Mendelssohn traces the origin of "Sami" Fischer on his mother's side to the Jewish family Ullmann. At the beginning of the eighteenth *century four brothers of that name* left Fürth in Bavaria, a town renowned for its old-established Jewish community with a high level of intellectual activity, and sought their fortunes in Austria and Hungary. One descendant, Minna Ullmann, was Fischer's mother. Another Ullmann, who remained in Fürth and developed a most prosperous wholesale paper business, changed his name in 1816 to Ullstein, which his sons later changed to Ullstein.

One of them, Leopold, decided to leave the family firm which had meanwhile moved to Leipzig, and to seek his fortune in Berlin where in 1848 he established his own wholesale paper company. It was he who twenty-nine years later, in July 1877, bought the *Neue Berliner Tageblatt* and the *printers Stahl and Assmann* who had supplied the funds for the paper, both close to bankruptcy at the time, and thus took the first step towards creating the Ullstein publishing empire.

For the next two decades, to the end of the century and Leopold Ullstein's death, his enterprise prospered. He was *greatly interested*, and involved, in the evolution of a modern, liberal political structure in Germany, an interest which undoubtedly accounted in part for his *decision* to go into publishing. The development of his business closely mirrored the rapid modernization and growth of the German economy and of German society after the establishment of a united Reich. At the time of his death, Ullstein owned a number of newspapers, morning and evening ones, as well *as a flourishing illustrated* weekly, the *Berliner Illustrirte*. Already at that time he employed 1,600 people, though thirty years later the figure was to rise to *10,000*.

After Leopold's death, the business was run by his five sons, the eldest, Hans, forty-one years old, the youngest, Hermann, to whom we owe a short history of the firm, twenty-one. Under the guidance of the younger generation, particularly of Louis, the most talented businessman *of the five, the business* continued to expand in many directions. By the 1930s it was a major empire similar to the great publishing empires that had *emerged and were emerging*, particularly in the United States and Britain. A number of new newspapers were started or acquired, among the latter, in 1913, the venerable *Vossiche Zeitung* which dated from 1705 and to which the old Fürth firm had supplied newsprint.

The *highly successful* weekly from the time of Leopold Ullstein, the *Berliner Illustrirte Zeitung*, was a specially important part of the business. By the end of the *First* World War it had reached a circulation of 1,500,000 and by the time Hitler came to power the circulation had doubled. Not only was it an eagerly read, abundantly illustrated news magazine with very substantial advertising, but it developed an important service for the popularization of well-known contemporary authors such as Thomas Mann and Schnitzler, an activity which, not surprisingly, was not always welcome to the publishers of the actual books, including, in a number of instances, S. Fischer.

Another highly successful feature inspired by American examples was *the development of an extensive* dress-pattern business. The so-called *Ullstein-Schnitte* became a household word; and by the early 1930s a phenomenon that had been familiar in other countries was also to be observed in Germany: the mutual strengthening, through publicity, of different parts of a large and diversified publishing conglomerate. The range was impressive: from the daily—morning, noon and evening—papers (both popular in format and editorial *character, and staid and highbrow*) through the popular illustrated weekly and a whole series of more substantial illustrated magazines, *Uhu, Die Koralle, Die Grüne Post*, to the much more sophisticated cosmopolitan art and literature journal *Der Querschnitt*.

Books were introduced into this great range in *1909*, through a series of cheap publications: Ullstein Bücher. Just as the United States had supplied the inspiration for much of the development in the magazine field, Britain, or more precisely, Scotland, was the source of the cheap Ullstein book. Nelson's New Century Library started by Thomas Nelson and Sons in Edinburgh in 1900, some years later to become Nelson's Classics, was the model. Large editions of popular authors, set up in Berlin, but printed and bound in Edinburgh by Nelson for Ullstein, became an immediate success and caused a good deal of heartache to the more traditional publishers, such as S. Fischer. The Ullstein Buch was attacked both for its material appearance and the alleged slovenliness of the editorial work; and when later Ullstein tried to compete for many successful authors, the criticism became even more marked.

Nevertheless, Ullstein was able to establish itself as a highly important and successful publisher of books as well as of newspapers and magazines; and in the course of time *to acquire a good deal of* "up-market" prestige, for example *by the acquisition from George* Müller of Propyläen Verlag with its handsome bibliophile editions and its art books, including a multi-volume History of Art.

It is difficult to distinguish degrees of persecution and misery brought upon different groups of Germans and German businesses by *the Nazis. That the Ullsteins were* of Jewish origin and that they were in publishing—including particularly newspapers and periodicals—ensured that they were among the earliest victims of the totalitarian regime. Within some months of Hitler's assumption of power, and after one after another of the publications of the house had been made virtually impossible, the Ullstein empire had been sold, at a fraction of its value, to Max Winkler, who had been *charged with the Gleichschaltung* of the press, and, through him, found its way to the control by Max Ammann and the Eher-Verlag, who published the Nazi party organ.

From then until 1945 when what remained of the Ullstein enterprise came under the control of the American occupation authorities, its history can be ignored. It was not until 1952 that the old firm was reinstated. Since then it has once again developed into an important part of the German publishing industry. The last ownership links with the family, though, have now disappeared, the firm having become part of the large Axel Springer Group. Its book publishing side is of considerable importance, particularly in the publication of memoirs, of translations of bestsellers, of special *students'* texts and in the continued activity of the Propyläen Verlag, with its World History, its Art History and its bibliophile editions. The *Morgenpost* and the *BZ* are still—or again—published and the large building that houses the firm now, the Springer-Ullstein-Haus, is a continuing monument to one of the most remarkable stories in European business history.

# Aria and ensemble

**By Philip Brady**

**PETER HACKS:**
**Oper**
*307pp. Düsseldorf: Claassen. DM 32.*

Looking back at the fledgling East German Democratic Republic's first *steps towards a cultural identity* some twenty-five years ago, a West German critic recently observed that its leaders showed their own cultural leanings unmistakably by preferring Roman togas to proletarian drill. In other words, East Germany's early ideologues, looking for models, looked backwards and, as it were, upwards. The *new society would*, Walter Ulbricht put it perfectly, write a third part to Goethe's *Faust*.

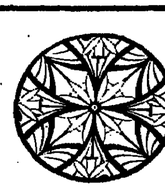
The classicizing stance, the regeneration of the cultural heritage, is, of course, purest Leninist orthodoxy and in East Germany it has proved to be no passing fancy. It has not lacked detractors—the balance between past and present is a delicate one to sustain and can easily be tipped towards one extreme or the other, towards archaism rum ylor or *modernism with an* antique veneer. Peter Hacks's own dialogue with the past has been persistent and fruitful. It has at times brought him close to *both* extremes—sometimes the antique flavour has been too strong, sometimes it has seemed to be no more than an added spice—but the aim has been balance, the balance of what he saw as a socialist classicism, mixing realism and grandeur, which was already a declared, if nebulous, goal as early as a famous essay of 1960 ("On the *Plays of Tomorrow*").

*Oper* looks backwards in a different way, not to shake the dust off a revered classic but to breathe life into what has never been seen to have much life of its own, the libretto. The volume is a mixed bag, beginning broadly with a comic account, close to Hacks's own experience, of an opera producer who, bent on self-expression, decides on an *Ariadne auf Naxos* in which seals perform and Ariadne strips. More substantial, if less vivid and less deftly presented, is the closing essay on the libretto. It is an attempt not to change the traditional order of priorities between text and music in opera—Hacks never denies the *subordinate role* of the librettist—but to suggest that a socialist society creates favourable conditions for a re-scrutiny of what a libretto can do. In such a *society there is, Hacks* argues, an interplay between individual and collective expression which has its counterpart, potentially at least, in the interplay of aria and ensemble.

Hacks is not pleading for realist, let alone socialist-realist, opera. On the contrary, the true librettist writes with the idealizing, poeticizing tendencies of opera firmly in mind. For opera is equipped to be revelatory without being down-to-earth, and operatic forms, in the tensions between aria, ensemble and narrative recitative, can "make social constellations more penetratingly clear than even classical drama".

It is some years now since a reviewer (*TLS*, April 3, 1969) saw Hacks's case as a "tragedy", the case of a writer withdrawing from topical subject-matter under pressure from authority, withdrawing into children's plays, adaptations of operettas and translations. Eight years later the direction seems not *to have changed*: with the *three* libretti which he includes in *Oper*, Hacks steps backwards rather than putting his own arguments into practice. One, a black farce (*Another spoonful of poison, dear?*), escapes into old-fashioned comic *frisson*. The other two (*Omphale* and *The Birds*) irreverently update their classical settings, relying on devices of pastiche and battles familiar since Offenbach.

In other words, theory and practice are at variance. This kind of mild contradiction is a familiar feature of the East German cultural landscape; part of the value of Hacks's book is that it is illuminating a familiar feature from an unfamiliar, eccentric angle. Those Roman togas are still being worn, but they do not always fit.

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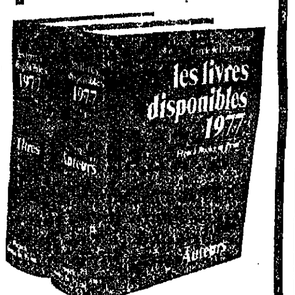


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**George L. Mosse**
**Intervista sul nazismo**
a cura di Michael A. Ledeen

pp. VIII-160, lire 2 000

sull'onda dei sentimenti revanscisti accesi dalla sconfitta, Hitler recupera il mito dell'ariano e organizza con un rituale di raduni, feste e simboli, un movimento di massa che si richiama ai valori del passato: il nazismo è un fenomeno culturale che affonda le radici nella Germania ottocentesca

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# Exile and its echoes

## By Ernest K. Bramsted

WALTER A. BERENDSOHN:
**Die humanistische Front**
Volume 2: Vom Kriegsausbruch 1939 bis Ende 1946
236pp. Worms: Heintz. DM36.

RICHARD ZIEGLER and MARTIN BEHEIM-SCHWARZBACH:
**Führer sehen Dich an**
20pp. Worms: Heintz.

HERMANN HAARMANN, LOTHAR SCHIRMER and DAGMAR WALLACH:
**Das 'Engels' Project**
Ein antifaschistisches Theater deutscher Emigranten in der USSR (1936-1941)
145pp. Worms: Heintz. DM 13.

FRANZ FUTTERKNECHT:
**Das Dritte Reich im deutschen Roman der Nachkriegszeit**
342pp. Bonn: Bouvier. DM42.

GERHARD ROLOFF:
**Exil und Exilliteratur in der deutschen Presse 1945-1949**
313pp. Worms: Heintz. DM38.

Lately there has been a remarkable upsurge of interest in German exile literature during the period of the Third Reich and in the few years immediately following it. Some of the studies of the subject are by former refugees, others by young *Germanisten* who probe into the living conditions, the struggles and achievements of what is seen as a distinct socio-literary group. Walter Berendsohn, the respected doyen of research in the field, belongs to the first category; it is a pity that the second part of his book *Die humanistische Front* (1949), could not be published until now. It is inevitably dated at a time when Hans Albert Walter, five decades younger than Berendsohn, has analysed the living conditions and the social status of the émigré writers, as well as the periodicals and works produced by them, in the first three of the planned eight volumes of his monumental *Deutsche Exilliteratur 1933-1950*.

Yet Berendsohn's brief surveys of refugee writers in various countries of Europe and outside it, his reflections on the changes in their position during the Second World War when they were able to join more actively in the ideological struggle against the Hitler regime, remain of interest because he knew many of the writers personally. He still insists on the humanism which he claims united them despite sharp political divisions and personal feuds. Unlike the sceptical Thomas Mann, Berendsohn believed at the time in the existence of "another Germany" and even saw some of the writers who had remained within the Reich as a kind of "literary maquis".

*The Führer sehen Dich an* (a larger edition, for bibliophiles, appeared in Edition Selva in Hilversum, Holland, in 1973) is likely to remain a lasting documentation and passionate exposure of Hitler and his henchmen. The bitter, astute drawings by Richard Ziegler and the gentler but equally critical sonnets by Martin Beheim-Schwarzbach are combined here for the first time. They originated quite independently of each other.

Ziegler already had a reputation for his graphic art in Germany before 1933. One year later, in exile on a Dalmatian island, he drew his incisive, revealing caricatures of the brown top-layer of Hitler, Göring, Goebbels, Röhm, Hess, Himmler, Streicher, etc, together with a few nationalists of the older type who had assisted their coming to power (Hindenburg, Ludendorff, von Papen). From 1937 onward Ziegler lived in England where some other graphic exposures of his of the rulers of the Third Reich appeared in 1940 under the title *We Make History* under the pseudonym of Robert Ziller. At about the same time Martin Beheim-Schwarzbach, who had fled from Hamburg to London just before the outbreak of war, published his poignant but more gentle sonnets.

Today when the Hitler cult and the often uncritical rehabilitation of some of the Führer's paladins seem to have become fashionable, Ziegler's superb portraits of monocled generals, brutal petty bourgeois types and miserable *Herrenvolk* masks can remind us that these men, singly and collectively, determined the fate of millions of human beings for twelve years.

An East German expert on the German theatre in exile, Walter Hader, has recently argued that through it the pre-Hitler "traditions were continued and an avant-garde initiated, theatre production enriched and the international solidarity of mankind furthered". *Das 'Engels' Project*, a study by three Marxist analysts of the German theatre project at Engels in the Volga German Republic of the Soviet Union, hardly bears out this claim. But it illuminates the attempt by Erwin Piscator and members of his team to continue the experimental theatre they had boldly and successfully built up in Berlin during the Weimar Republic.

Piscator, who went to Moscow as early as 1931 and three years later became president of the "International Revolutionary Theatre League" (IRTB), then seems to have had the support of the leading men in the Kremlin. He and his deputy, Bernhard Reich, endeavoured to persuade some prominent German writers, producers and actors in exile in Western Europe to join and assist them in transforming the existing German Academic State Theatre at Engels into an artistic centre of the anti-fascist struggle. Even Bertolt Brecht at one time toyed with the idea of following Piscator's call. The German of the native actors at Engels was oddly antiquated and rusty, reminding their refugee colleagues of Luther's time. Piscator himself hoped through his new experiment "to prepare for a theatre of special quality in Germany after the fall of the Hitler regime".

The repertoire at Engels included works by Shakespeare and Ibsen and *The Trojan Horse*, a play about the illegal resistance of workers in the Third Reich by Friedrich Wolf, a refugee in the Soviet Union. But it soon turned out that in the climate of the Moscow show trials and of Stalin's rigorous insistence on "social realism", the dream of the Engels experiment was to be short-lived.

The closing of the Meyerhold theatre in Moscow in 1936 after *Pravda*'s attack on its "left-wing libertinism and formalism" foreshadowed the end of the somewhat independent approach of the German stage in Engels. Piscator soon became disillusioned. In the autumn of 1936, when he was touring western Europe, he received messages from his German friends in Russia, Bernhard Reich and Wilhelm Pieck (later President of the German Democratic Republic), warning him not to return to the Soviet Union. Instead he went to New York, where he gave a strong impetus to the American theatre. Piscator's colleague, the producer Maxim Vallentin, was arrested in Engels in April 1937, and he and his actors were denounced as "perfidious Trotskyite Bukharinite enemies of the people". With a performance of another play by Friedrich Wolf, *Peter kehrt heim*, the Engels experiment came to a close in October 1937. If Piscator could claim that under National Socialism the theatre in Germany had lost its earlier joy of experimenting, "the Stalinist deformed Soviet Russia" was, indeed, in the words of the present study, "not the place to revive it".

It was not to the Soviet Union but to the United States that most German refugee authors, actors and filmscript writers fled in two waves, the first between 1933 and 1937, the second at the time of the fall of France in 1940. Even Brecht arrived there in May 1941 from Finland having realized earlier that it was too risky for him to settle in the Soviet Union, where his art was regarded as too close to that of "formalist heretics such as Meyerhold, Eisenstein . . .". Brecht and his family lived for several years in South California, which acquired a considerable colony of German and Austrian authors, musicians and filmscript writers. As Erna M. Moore has recently pointed out in a remarkable essay, "Exile in Hollywood" in *Deutsche Exilliteratur seit 1933, Volume 1: Kalifornien* (edited by John M. Spalek and Joseph Strelka), these people were able to lead a much more secure and dignified existence than refugees from Hitler in other parts of the world living in an attractive landscape with an agreeable climate, helped by various "assistance committees", they were without long-term financial worries and "could largely devote themselves to their literary production". Yet an analysis of their later autobiographical comments reveals "how deeply unhappy and discontented most exile authors were in spite of the relatively favourable living conditions in the west of the USA". Especially the older men among them had difficulties with the American mentality and above all with the English language.

True, some star writers, who before 1933 had reached a large American public through the English translations of their works, continued to prosper. One of them was Thomas Mann, who soon managed to address American audiences in English, while continuing to write in German. But others lacking his earlier reputation in the United States, or that of a Franz Werfel or Lion Feuchtwanger, were unable to place their manuscripts or film scripts. Resentfully, they continued to write for a non-existing public.

Most of the literary men and screenplay writers lived in a self-made ghetto under "exterritoriality" as Ludwig Marcuse once put it bluntly. They remained largely addicted to the spirit, the mores and traditions of their native country. Marcuse later confessed that in California his mind had never wandered far away from Berlin's Tiergarten. In exile he wrote and lectured on German romanticism, Heine and Nietzsche in the light of contemporary events, frequently attacking their interpretation by fellow émigrés, including Thomas Mann. Yet some years later Marcuse commended this attitude during the American exile. Thomas Mann played a role that he had never desired; he was Emperor of all the German émigrés and particularly of the tribe of the writers. Everything was expected of him, everything was owed to him, he was made responsible for everything. All the devotion was concentrated on him, all the rebellion was directed against him. . . . All were of the opinion that in America nothing was possible without Thomas Mann.

In the autumn of 1943, when ideas on a future democratic Germany were much ventilated by refugee intellectuals, the views of Mann and of Brecht proved sharply antagonistic. Brecht argued that Germany was the first country taken over by the Hitler regime with the help of the capitalist bourgeoisie. He sympathized with the exploited, misled and now suffering German masses. Mann, on the other hand, rejected the legend of the dualism of a "good" or "bad" Germany. To him there was only one Germany, the best of which had turned into evil. As Herbert Lehnert shows in an essay in the Spalek/Strelka volume, Brecht hoped for a "social revolution" and was against drastic punishment "and re-education" of the German masses.

On the other hand, Mann wrote to Agnes Meyer on August 9, 1945: "There is among German left-wing Socialists a kind of parrotlike fashion that 'nothing must happen to Germany'" after an Allied victory. "I do not share this feeling." Mann wished that the Allies would "not commit irreparable follies which would burden the future" but "from a mere moral and educational point of view, at first, the fall [of Germany] and the atonement cannot be deep enough after the ridiculous arrogance, the vicious superiority, madness and the fantasies of violence which this nation in intoxication has allowed itself".

Probably in the year following Mann's refusal to join the Council for a Democratic Germany, Brecht denounced him in an unfair but spirited poem in German, entitled "When the Nobel Prize Winner Thomas Mann conceded the Right to the Americans and the English to castigate the German People for Ten Years for the Crimes of the Hitler Regime".

How far does Mann's novel *Doctor Faustus*, written in the same period, reflect the German problem? It presents it in the first instance not as a political, but as an aesthetic issue. To quote Dr Lehnert "The book is self-criticism and self-accusation: it therefore presupposes that the artist is a secret leader of the people. Germany is defined through her aesthetically cunning art, specifically through her music." Although the account by Serenus Zeitblom, the worthy but puzzled friend of the brilliant composer Adrian Leverkühn, closes with the German collapse of 1945, and though the First World War, the revolution of 1918 and subsequent events, are discernible in the story, National Socialism as a political force hardly surfaces. Yet the German cultural crisis is always in the background. Concern for Germany remains in the narrative to its last sentence, the lonely narrator's prayer: "God be merciful to thy poor soul, my friend, my Fatherland!"

In his clumsily written but learned doctoral thesis on the picture of the Third Reich given by some German novels of the early post-war period, Franz Futterknecht gives pride of place to *Doctor Faustus*. In a somewhat artificial manner he tries to trace a theory of fascism and of the efforts to overcome it. He argues that *Doctor Faustus* contributes indirectly to the understanding of German fascism through its insights into the intellectual history, the complex traditions of the cultured middle class and their breakdown. He makes much of the fragmentary remains of the Reformation, of liberal Enlightenment and of Goethean *Bildung* woven into the story of the advance and later collapse of the incomparable innovator Leverkühn.

Dr Futterknecht regards the idea that the times in which a sublimation of vitality by the mind (*Geist*) was possible are gone for ever, "one of the central themes" in *Doctor Faustus*. He disagrees with the critical view put forward by Reinhard Baumgart that Mann's presentation of the origins of German fascism as the story of the seduction and perversion of thought, as a *Bildungskatastrophe*, is too ideological and misleading, for it does not truly account for the mood that led to Auschwitz and Bichmann. Yet there is historic reality behind Mann's ironic account of the debates of the "Kridwiss circle" in Munich, that handful of authoritarian intellects who regarded the Weimar Republic as "ephemeral, as meaningless from the start, yes, as a bad joke to be dismissed with a shrug".

These scientists, scholars and teachers were quite prepared to accept a mounting wave of irrationalism and barbarism, indulging in the bold prediction in Georges Sorel's *Réflexions sur la violence* that in the future the masses would have to be provided with mythical fictions, "devised like primitive heroic-epics, to release and activate political energies".

Kridwiss and his circle were actually modelled on prominent intellectuals whom Thomas Mann had known in Munich during and soon after the First World War. The ideas of such people anticipated those of many neo-conservative nationalists like the contributors to Hans Zehrer's journal *Die Tat* in the early 1930s which helped to pave the way to the Third Reich. Yet it can be argued that a more convincing portrait of the outlook of nationalist activism in the 1920s emerges from Ernst von Salomon's lively autobiographical novel *Der Fragebogen* (1953), also analysed by Futterknecht. Salomon, a member of a Freecorps and a freebooter who helped to assassinate Walter Rathenau, was a fascist yet never joined Hitler's ranks. Students of the period can gain a clearer and more convincing picture of the German nationalist outlook from Salomon's graphic and cynical, but not dishonest, narrative than from Thomas Mann's all too abstract perspectives.

After the war most of the surviving émigré writers returned to a battered fatherland under fourfold Allied occupation. Their reception and that of their works is now a topic of historic interest. That exile and exile literature reminded about for many natives, and that ignorance and prejudice played their role, was perhaps to be expected. How far were they overcome? In his elaborate study, *Exil und Exilliteratur in der deutschen Presse 1945-1949* Gerhard Roloff skilfully disentangles the complex theme by examining the Allied controlled press between 1945 and 1949 with the help of statistics. He analyses the impact of the personalities and the writings of thirteen widely read and discussed émigré authors, and the frequency of their mention in nineteen selected newspapers six appearing in the American zone, seven in the British zone, three in the French zone and three in the Russian sector of Berlin. Some of these, like the American-controlled *Neue Zeitung*, under its first editor, Hans Habe, himself an émigré in American uniform, gave much more space to articles on and by exiled authors than most other newspapers, including *Die Welt*, the leading daily in the British zone.

The list of the most frequently cited authors in the newspapers examined is topped by Thomas Mann (777 mentions), followed by the poet Johannes R. Becher who had returned from Russia and lived in the Soviet zone (387 mentions). Bertolt Brecht came immediately after him (383), while less frequently appeared the names of Carl Zuckmayer (283), Friedrich Wolf (241), Heinrich Mann, who died in 1946 before being able to return to Germany (224), Anna Seghers (200) and Franz Werfel (169). The striking predominance of Thomas Mann was partly due to his literary fame, which went back to the beginning of the century, and partly to the many controversies in which he was involved in the early post-war years, like the debate over the existence of an "inner emigration" inside the Hitler Reich, or the fact that in 1949 he visited both West and East Germany, accepting Goethe prizes in Frankfurt and Weimar.

This political "neutrality" was sharply criticized in most of the selected newspapers outside the Soviet zone of Germany. On the other hand, Carl Zuckmayer's play *Des Teufels General*, written in the United States in 1942 and first staged in Zurich in 1946, was rejected by communist newspapers as a glorification of militarism, while it met with much approval in the West German press for depicting the fate of a member of the old ruling class who had had the courage to resist the devilish Hitler tyranny. It is also significant that out of fifty-seven plays discussed in the newspapers, *Des Teufels General* received the highest number of reviews (20), followed by Brecht's *Puntila* (15) and Zuckmayer's other drama *Barbara Blomberg* (14).

Roloff's useful survey ends on a sceptical note. He finds that "despite information about the emigration and its cultural achievements was the concern of only a handful of active and personally involved intellectuals. . . . Their initiative produced no permanent echo under the historical conditions of the years 1945-1949 and was later apparently forgotten."

# Heydrich as hero

## By J. W. Bruegel

LINA HEYDRICH:
**Leben mit einem Kriegsverbrecher**
Commentary by Werner Maser
211pp. Munich: Ludwig. DM29.

Reinhard Heydrich was one of Hitler's most hated henchmen, and the only good thing that can be said about him is that he was also one of the least ugly. That his widow should publish her memoirs, trying to whitewash him, more than thirty years after he was killed by Czech parachutists sent from England, and that she should find a publisher for an extraordinarily badly and amateurishly written book is amazing enough. Still more surprising is that she agreed to publication even on the terms evidently demanded by her publisher, namely, that the book should be supplied with a commentary in which a well-known historian describes her as a distorter and falsifier of facts.

The title "Life with a War Criminal" is naturally meant ironically; for Lina Heydrich, an unrepentant National Socialist even now, sees her husband—architect of the "final solution", organizer of the faked "Polish" attack on the Gleiwitz broadcasting station that was a pretext for the German invasion of Poland, mass-murderer of both Czech resistance fighters and harmless citizens—as nothing but a hero wholly to be admired. He hated Goebbels, we are told, he despised Goering and even doubted whether Hitler was strong enough a man; but he himself was a gentleman *sans peur et sans reproche*. (The fact that the Führer remarried ten years ago and is now the wife of a Flim is nowhere mentioned). Though she concedes that as chief of the Gestapo Heydrich had a somewhat unpleasant job, she is ready with his excuses: "I must do it. Anyone else would misuse it for his own interests." After all, "whatever he did, men in his position on the other side have done likewise". One has still to hear about a British or French "man in his position" preparing the systematic extinction of millions of human beings.

But if we believe Frau Heydrich, her wife-worshipping husband, in spite of the nastiness of the Jews ("we were provoked by the Jews and obliged to hate them") wanted nothing worse for them than to give them a nice home in Madagascar, and only the Führer prevented that. His announcement at the notorious Wannsee Conference in January 1942 about the "coming final solution of the Jewish question", and the majority of Jewish forced workers "falling out through natural diminution", she does not even now accept.

In September 1941 Heydrich was sent by Hitler to Prague as "Reich Protector" to tame the Czechs. He began his reign with mass executions which obviously remained unknown to his wife, pontificating as she does, that the Czechs "did not understand that even 'punishment' might be a protection". She assures her readers that Heydrich had only the best intentions for the Czechs, namely "to win them for Hitler's Europe". Again she does not seem to believe that he intended to achieve this no doubt laudable aim by forcibly Germanizing the majority, transforming a large part to Siberia and executing the rest in cold blood; hence her absolute and repeated inability to understand why anybody should have wanted to remove Heydrich from the scene.

She is thus naturally annoyed with the Federal Republic's rejection of her claim for a widow's pension on the basis of her husband's services—not as mass murderer but, she claims, as an ordinary, though unusually able official.

Her evasiveness, her attempts to shift any guilt she cannot deny to other representatives of the Third Reich, her stubborn refusal even to read incriminating documents are established point by point in the commentary by the biographer of Hitler, Werner Maser. But was the whole exercise really necessary?

*Über Hans Mayer* (edited by Inge Jens; 200pp. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp. DM7) is a seventieth birthday present, which also signals Hans Mayer's elevation to primary status. After even the barest outline of this distinguished Marxist critic's career—1939-45 in exile in France and Switzerland; 1948-63 in Leipzig, as colleague of Ernst Bloch; 1965-73 at Hanover—it is not entirely surprising that politics should have intervened even in the production of this tribute. The East German copyright bureau refused permission to reprint a number of articles prompted by a 1956 radio talk by Mayer on the wretched state of literature in *both* Germanies. By way of revenge Inge Jens includes the offending piece and enough extracts to demonstrate the nature and the level of the attacks on the heretical advocate of Joyce and Kafka by the mouthpieces of cultural orthodoxy, J. R. Becher, Alfred Kurella, *et al.* In this light it is astonishing only that Mayer lasted in the GDR as long as he did. After this heady start, the rest of the compilation is inevitably more mundane. It is the usual formula: reprinted essays and reviews by, among others, Uwe Johnson (a former Leipzig pupil), Peter Demetz, Peter Hartling, Walter Jens, Marcel Reich-Ranicki, with a new essay on Mayer's "contribution to the theory of ideology" by Hans Heinz Holz. The bibliography reveals that its subject's productivity "in retirement" is undiated.


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# Stuck in a groove

**By Gertrud Mander**

**KARIN STRUCK :**
**Lieben**
450pp. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp. DM34.

Karin Struck's first novel *Klassenliebe*, an unhappy love story across class barriers, was an instant best-seller in West Germany where the working-class writer and working-class perspective are still something of a rarity. A curiosity reaction of "Look, they can write like us" boosted the sales of this intensely confessional novel and of its equally confessional successor, *Die Mutter*, in which the working-class perspective had acquired the strident women's-lib angle of "can I ever become a mother like mine?" Now, in the third instalment of this apparently inexhaustible autobiography (each book covers the experiences undergone since the last one was written) the confidence of author and publisher in the reader's limitless appetite for more of the same female outspokenness, man-hating self-pity and soul-searching seem to have become boundless.

Boldness and calculation paid off handsomely: though universally damned by the critics as a shamelessly egocentric, shapeless, gossipy, and vulgar rehash of its two forerunners, *Lieben* soon acquired a sensational notoriety and has had sales comparable to Erica Jong's latest novel, with which it ran neck-and-neck in the bestseller list. Like her more sophisticated, self-mocking, amusing American equivalent Karin Struck does not, of course, quite manage to fathom or define love philosophically, though she does her best to coin memorable aphorisms which amount to the generalization that loving is basically the inability to be alone.

She certainly applies no figleaves and respects no taboos, generously describing every intimate physical detail of her—or rather her thinly disguised heroine Lotte's—immensely active sex-life with first husband, then journalist lover I, Lesbian student lover II, one-night stands III, IV, and V, and finally the eleven-years younger, unemployed, drug addict lover VI, who is also the last as the book ends in the imagined eternal embrace of Lotte and Lenz in the mortuary freezing chamber, a kitschily neo-baroque version of the romantic "and they lived happily ever after". As the names suggest, the book is littered with knowing literary allusions by which the author boldly puts herself on a level with Goethe and Büchner: no self-respecting German writer today without classical backing!

Ms Struck is not content with the all-out treatment of sex—never completely satisfying or pleasurable, let alone consummate, since her Protestant revulsion from foreign bodies seems to be the reason for her compulsive promiscuity and dissatisfaction. No new discovery this, of course, except for Ms Struck. Piling up more romantic clichés, she also treats extensively the topic of death, in the form of her suicidal wishes, a traumatic abortion, and other fatal fantasies and facts, all in a similarly adolescent rambling vein, blaming men and the world, although her morbidity is obviously self-induced. Less is said about the rest of her life—her two children and her profession as a midwife are merely foils to complete the naturalistic picture. The dirty stream of consciousness—minus the structural shape needed to contain it in a work of literature—runs on in the fashionable grooves of sex, violence, and death.

The whole thing seems to be a case of arrested puberty: the gushiness, the rhetorical questions, the identity confusion, the fascination with every physical reaction, the wallowing in misery, the churning-out of platitudes as if they were original ideas, the disjointed, circular motion of the narrative, the lack of style and discipline. But in all the sordid, kitschy, repetitive detail of copulating, menstruating, aborting—of/purting rather than stimulating erotic stuff this—one discerns the bleeding heart and hears the cry for help and cannot help sympathizing with this woman fighting for her life and struggling with her undirected sexuality, her overwhelming need to love and be loved, her neurotic loneliness and lack of purpose.

In this sense, the book is a document for the psychotherapist: it is the material, produced by associations of dream, fantasy and half-understood experience, which patients offer on the couch. What it lacks is the analyst's interpretation and, of course, the cure. This makes it unsatisfactory both as information and as literature, yet it seems to satisfy many readers as material on which to feed their voyeuristic appetite and practise self-diagnosis.

# Breakdown gang

**By Sheila Stern**

**WALTER MATTHIAS DIGGELMANN :**
**Der Reiche stirbt**
183pp. Cologne: Benziger. DM21.80.

**UNICA ZÜRN :**
**Der Mann im Jasmin**
209pp. Berlin : Ullstein.

**ULRICH POTHAST :**
**Die Reise nach Las Vegas**
194pp. Frankfurt: Insel. DM22.

**HERBERT ACHTERNBUSCH :**
**Land in Sicht**
159pp. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp. DM18.

The characteristic these four books share is a willed peculiarity, a solipsistic preciosity hardly to be dignified by the name of eccentricity. Madness and dream are the theme of two, mad behaviour and dream-like movement the subject of a third. The fourth, *Der Reiche Stirbt*, is ostensibly a conventional novel about a Citizen Kane-figure employing as chauffeur a Felix Krull-figure to "drive him to his death"—the pun is English, not German. It is written in a poker-faced style, possibly intended to do duty for irony but in fact suggesting pathological apathy, which makes it nearly unreadable.

*Der Mann im Jasmin* reminds us that being mad should not in itself be mistaken for the condition of being a surrealist artist. That this was Unica Zürn's destiny is apparently in part the responsibility of André Breton himself; she busied herself with the composition of countless anagrams from short sentences. Her book consists of heart-breaking accounts of successive breakdowns; they ended with her suicide in 1970. Surrealism is the mainstay of the most pretentious of these works, *Die Reise nach Las Vegas*, in which a patient suffering from mutism and an identity crisis is driven a long way by rival psychiatrists hoping to use him as an exhibit at a congress they never reach. Henri Rousseau's picture of the sleeper and the lion is repeatedly described as seen by the pair. This is a kind of Easy Rider of somnambulism, and the journey is made not only by motor-cycle but also by dormobile, sports-car and in a prefabricated house on a trans porter. An Easy Reader it is not.

Herbert Achternbusch in *Land in Sicht* talks loudly and endlessly to and about himself. The book consists of two film-scenarios separated by a rambling journal, the most memorable features of which are an account of the author's reactions to a Japanese film. The theme of drowning recurs frequently in the film-scripts, which are mostly about Herbert and Heinz, an ego and an alter ego. One, it seems, has been made into a film in which these two set off to swim to America, and Herbert is last seen as a tiny head in the distances of the ocean—a picture that becomes very attractive to a careful reader of *Land in Sicht*.

# Taking the plunge

**MELCHIOR VISCHER :**
**Sekunde durch Hirn, Der Teemeister, Der Hase, und andere Prosa**
Edited by Hartmut Geerken
207pp. Munich: edition text plus kritik.

After studying in Prague and surviving the First World War as a stretcher-bearer, Melchior Vischer briefly wrote experimental prose, before turning to the theatre. Having immersed himself in the production of historical biographies during the Third Reich, he tried unsuccessfully to revert to a journalistic career in both West and East Berlin, was thrown back on social security and finally died in almost total obscurity two years ago. The present piece of literary archaeology resurrects Vischer's writings of the early 1920s, notably *Sekunde durch Hirn*, which (with a jacket illustration by Kurt Schwitters) made Vischer known in literary circles.

This short grotesque "novel" consists of an enormous parenthesis: representing the "second" between the protagonist losing his balance and meeting the pavement forty floors below. Its linguistic exuberance (archaisms, neologisms, Germanized foreign words such as *Schoffür* and *Roloaff*) and its extreme syntactic compression relate to *Sturm* writers such as August Stramm and Otto Nebel, while its eroticism and exoticism recall Carl Einstein's *Bebuquin*. Strangely, there is no evidence that Vischer had any contact with either the *Sturm* or the Dadaists, but Hartmut Geerken claims *Sekunde durch Hirn* as "one of the most accomplished pieces of prose in Dadaist literature". He detects roots in Lewis Carroll, Morgenstern and Paul Scheerbart, and affinities with Arno Schmidt and Ernst Jandl.

P. L.



# Male and female in Melanesia

**By K. O. L. Burridge**

**FRANCIS EDGAR WILLIAMS :**
**"The Vailala Madness" and Other Essays**
Edited by Erik Schwimmer
432pp. Hurst. £11.

**DONALD F. TUZIN :**
**The Ilahita Arapesh Dimensions Of Unity**
376pp. University of California Press. £13.25.

**ANNETTE B. WEINER :**
**Women of Value, Men of Renown New Perspectives in Trobriand Exchange**
299pp. University of Texas Press. $14.95.

What makes the Melanesian scene so fascinating, particularly in Papua New Guinea, is the variety of cultural textures that can be woven from relatively few and simple threads and, at the same time, the very different and apparently quite discontinuous questions that can be asked of them by social or cultural anthropologists. The varieties of social orders encountered seem to arise from a "deep structure" comprising the interrelationships of male filiation repeated and adumbrated in the relations between elder brother and younger brother and between senior and junior; the brother-sister relationship keyed to marriage; affinal relations and those between mother's brother and sister's son; exchanges, particularly between affines, whereby each individual, in cooperation or competition (but always in that rivalry which yields political influence) reveals who he or she is and where he or she stands in relation to others; relations to land that provide for intergenerational continuity, yielding a historical sense; males and females in generally complementary opposition; the transcendent grounded in and only emerging from pragmatic interaction. These features may be elaborated into a dual organization with named or existential moieties affinally linked; into descent systems and clans; and into local groupings with varying ritual arrangements.

Intensive fieldwork entails that the anthropologists who describe these social orders be concerned—whatever their questions—with the implications of the constraints and opportunities inhering in particularly related situations. Francis Edgar Williams, keenly aware that he drew his salary from a budget devoted to native welfare and benefit, was prone to subordinate intellectual or scientific questions to how life in the villages could be "improved" or at least protected from what seemed to be the more undesirable effects of the exposure to Western civilization. Still, concentrating as he did on the situations presented to him, he was always a superb ethnographer and, in retrospect, a great anthropologist. Donald F. Tuzin and Annette B. Weiner are neophytes in relation to Williams but have the advantages of a lapse of three or four intellectual generations and more sophisticated methodologies. Dr Tuzin asks why a village or cluster of settlements in the Sepik area of Papua New Guinea is so unusually large, and Dr Weiner is concerned with the significance of women in the Trobriands.

Papua, as it was then known, was F. E. Williams's second home for more than twenty years as a government anthropologist. He had had a preliminary year at Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar with R. R. Marrett, and later spent another year under Bronislaw Malinowski at the London School of Economics. Before his untimely death in an air crash in the Owen Stanleys in 1943, he had written four monographs (*Orokaiva Magic*, *Orokaiva Society*, *Papuans of the Trans-Fly* and *Drama of Orokolo*) each of which, reissued by the Clarendon Press, has become a classic in the literature. He also wrote many other shorter pieces, the most important of which (including "Trading Voyages from the Gulf of Papua", "Bull-Roarers in the Papuan Gulf", "Sex Affiliation and its Implications" "Natives of Lake Kutubu, Papua", "The Vailala Madness and the Destruction of Native Ceremonies in the Gulf Division", "The Vailala Madness in Retrospect", and "The Creed of a Government Anthropologist") have been gathered together by Erik Schwimmer. Professor Schwimmer, who worked with the Orokaiva two generations or so after Williams had done, and whose monograph, *Exchange in the Social Structure of the Orokaiva*, 1973, has been rightly acclaimed, is to be congratulated both on his initiative and on the introduction he provides. There are few students who do not cut their teeth on reworking his ethnography from different theoretical standpoints and F. E. Williams deserves to be so remembered.

Government anthropologists within the British Commonwealth have been few, and their careers variable and usually short. F. E. Williams is the exception. He enjoyed the people and his work, appreciated what most missionaries were trying to do, claimed no special privileges, got on and was popular with his peers in other branches of government service. Moreover, in his chief and patron, Sir Hubert Murray, for so long the Lieutenant-Governor and/or Administrator of Papua, Williams had a friend who shared his views on colonial development and those of his perhaps better-known brother at Oxford, Gilbert Murray. Such a triumvirate was not one which even a parsimonious government cared to offend. And certainly the intellectual camaraderie offered by such a relationship did much to offset the staleness and the lack of stimulation that are entailed in spending long periods in the field.

Nevertheless, Williams consistently shied away from the more imaginative intellectual problems posed by ethnographic discovery, and he clung to the then fashionable terms of reference. Thus, in his essay "Bull-Roarers in the Papuan Gulf" he acknowledges that to the Elema the Bull-Roarer is more than a toy or something to scare the women, but concludes that the problem this presents is "really a matter of no great consequence". Though Williams wore his functionalism well, it chafed. He seems to have cast about for alternatives but, denied regular interaction with academic colleagues, his sallies into critique were in the end trivial. Without the opportunity to fix and affirm himself in relation to others—as his villagers were doing continually through exchanges—and unsure of his own intellectual standing, he tended to discard his own brightest perceptions. Professor Schwimmer's comment that the attitude of the British anthropological establishment towards Williams was "patronizing" is fair. Williams hardly participated in the academic conversation of the time and he quite explicitly denied the fundamental tenet of some sort of system in culture. But to go on to say that Williams "did not rate an obituary in *Man*" is a little strong. *Man* does not acknowledge death until it is some months past, and obituaries, when editorial policy allows them at all, tend to be volunteered rather than solicited. In 1943, with those who knew Williams scattered half across the globe, and *Man* only half afloat, it would have been the more remarkable if an obituary had been published.

The signs of Williams's theoretical prescience noted by Professor Schwimmer are not really convincing, and would seem to have been derived from the nature of the work rather than from a self-conscious intellectual awareness. While

## Mt Wilson, NSW

*Some of those who settled*
*this Blue Mountains country*
*landscaped their dreams of home*
*and planted out their continuing pain.*
*Now beneath the eucalypts*
*the sprinkled glow of herbaceous borders*
*against the grey-green cyclorama of the Bush.*
*It is November and the spring daffodils*
*are flush with the dulled yellow*
*of a northern sun.*
*On the garden wall some are left, fresh-cut*
*for sale, with bunches of tidy primroses,*
*and a trusting bowl for payment.*
*A notice by the gate will stop*
*the stranger short :*
*'Australian natives,' it says,*
*'one dollar each.'*

Rodney Pybus

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AP

Williams has his assured place in the history of the subject as a great ethnographer, and the present collection, bringing so conveniently together between two covers so much that was valuable and scattered, puts the seal on that reputation. It cannot be said that he altered the course of the development of the subject in any determined way—though without him our knowledge of Papuan peoples would have been much the poorer.

By contrast, Dr Tuzin and Dr Weiner are perhaps over-eager to stake their claims to theoretical relevance. Nevertheless, following in F. E. Williams's footsteps, the professionalism of the fieldwork is in both cases impressive. Dr Tuzin's *The Ilahita Arapesh*, though a whole in itself, is the first of what is conceived as a two-volume study, the groundwork for an analysis of ritual and religion. Margaret Mead, who, it will be remembered, worked with the Mountain Arapesh and in other Sepik regions some forty years ago, has written a foreword. She visited Dr and Mrs Tuzin while they were in the field, marvels at the ease and expertise with which they went about their business, and compares the conditions of yesteryear with those of today. She also, as always, makes some pertinent remarks about the intellectual or theoretical framework. For in attempting to answer the question "Why so large?" Dr Tuzin relates a well-disciplined historical analysis to oral traditions and such documentation as exists. He also considers topography, geography, ethology, psychology and cultural ecology. But his analysis is always grounded in situational constraints and opportunities.

Though Dr Tuzin himself is ambiguous on the point, Margaret Mead is clear that the book is about the way in which "structure emerges from a historical situation". Now though it may be a simple question of words, it seems clear that, given the deep structure of Melanesian social orders, the historical events adduced became the material with which to elaborate a pretty consistent and general pattern. Male filiation is expressed and institutionalized in patrilineal clans; oppositions between older or senior and younger or junior emerge in fraternal rivalry, and in an intricate care system whereby the older men withhold secret and magical resources from the younger, only sharing them in small chunks as the younger pass through a graded series of ritual initiations. Rather than the elaboration of dual organizations being an "adaptive response to fraternal tension", they have more surely emerged, as elsewhere, from the brother-sister, marriage and affinal exchange—though fraternal tension is certainly an important part of the syndrome. The more we get to know about the peoples of Papua New Guinea, the more we become aware of warfare, migrations in drifts and drubs, the easy absorption of individuals and families of one culture into others. Where there is a convenient and continuous line of ridges and spurs—as is the case with Ilahita—there refugees tend to settle, forming a united front against outsiders without entirely forgoing their own internal and historically derived differences. And in attempting to extract a general principle from the particular historical experience of the people of Ilahita, continually resorting to specifics of resource management or cultural ecology to account for or explain the general, Dr Tuzin seems to have strained at a camel and swallowed a gnat.

Some clue to this striving is to be found in the concluding chapter, a spirited if misdirected critique of Claude Lévi-Strauss and structuralism. In her foreword Margaret Mead gently chides Dr Tuzin on this chapter, suggesting that Dr Tuzin's own position might be a vindication of Lévi-Strauss's general theory. Be that as it may, as one sends the book and delights in the painstaking fieldwork and attention to relevant detail, alternately approving and frowning at the statistical data, tables, maps, flights of fantasy (the "unleashing of relentless bugbears", some of which turn out to be "terminology") and, often, the ambiguous misuse of terms ("norm" is statistical, not to be equated with "normative", prescriptive or preferred; epistemology and ideology, often cotermINous, some usefully kept distinct), the last chapter can only be greeted with a sigh of regret. Separating the straight ethnography from the explicit reflections on it, one is struck with the way the former—especially in the light of that "deep structure"—falls so easily and naturally into a structuralist framework. Why, then, the attack? Perhaps only Dr Tuzin can answer that. It is sufficient here to point out that Lévi-Strauss's position or positions are not necessarily those ascribed to him by critics and interpreters. Dr Tuzin's critique seems to be based on as complete a misunderstanding of Lévi-Strauss's work as is possible. Yet one feature this chapter has in common with the others: a fine and subtle intellect striving against the grain of the material.

Dr Tuzin has not been well served by his publishers, editors and proof readers. Printer's errors, and misspellings, abound; proper nouns within a few lines of each other are spelled differently; sows are surely served not serviced by boars, and despite the pidgin *ex* (origin, basis), neither in English nor American do fundament and fundamental precisely coincide.

From the Sepik to the Trobriands. Dr Weiner takes off from Malinowski and Harry Powell and fills in what they left out: Trobriand women—something which very much needed to be done. And male anthropologists are soundly taken to task for this general omission. But how fairly? I know of no male anthropologist in Melanesia who has not been wholly chagrined at his inability to find out about women. Social orders, all the men's plotting, arranging and manoeuvring, so very cleanly revolve round them. Yet in Melanesia one has to accept the fact that a male is a male whatever colours he flies. Close association with the women is seen inevitably to lead into scandal, accusation and recrimination, arguments about worthwhile compensation, perhaps violence, and administrative action. A stranger woman, on the other hand, is effectively neuter. Men as well as women will talk freely with her. One could expand at length on the more intimate consequences of the asymmetry of the two sets of relationships. It suffices that, other things being equal, women have a decided advantage over men in anthropological fieldwork, and, were it not for other things being unequal, should have preferment in the profession. As one would expect of a student of Professor De Laguna, Dr Weiner puts this advantage to excellent use. Though there are passages of more or less incomprehensible hyperbole, they do not impugn the solid and systematic presentation of the material which, framed within a life cycle—starting with death—reveals Trobriand women as wholly involved in social life and certainly not second-class citizens.

The book starts with death because mortuary ceremonies are occasions when women are most involved in making exchanges amongst themselves revealing most aspects of the significance of women in Trobriand society, and also because within a few days of arriving in the Trobriands Dr Weiner herself became involved in a funeral. In the Trobriands the "deep structure" is elaborated into an organization of matrilineal clans which are locally dispersed. Malinowski's favourite themes of male filiation (father-son) and the mother's brother-sister's son relationship, with regard to marriage and affinal exchanges are documented, refined and crucially expanded by Dr Weiner who, in addition, provides a valuable excursus into the way in which claims to the use of land are resolved within those relationships. Through these exchanges of foodstuffs and valuables which, as everywhere in Melanesia, have to take account of those of the other sex who may be involved, men and women reiterate their positions in relation to one another and make claims to relative status. But, to paraphrase Dr Weiner, while men's exchanges document the continuities and discontinuities of political power in historical time, women's exchanges refer to cosmic values in "unmarked time". Though when Dr Weiner really means by "time" and "cosmic" is not as clear as it might be, women, thought to control the regenerative processes, provide individuals with crucial identities which, directly linked to the mythic past, give them primary placement in the present.

Though the "inner substance" of a child is thought of as being constituted of *dala* (or clan) blood, conceived of a woman and a spirit child who has itself been reincarnated from an old *baloma* or spirit of a dead person, men contribute directly to the growth of the children prior to birth through sexual intercourse, and throughout their children's early years by providing them with food, nurture, gifts and protection. Origin stories, says Dr Weiner, are

> political dogma used by men not only to verify their rights to land but to establish their prerogatives to taboos, rank, and in some cases to polygamous practices. In this way, origin stories constitute ideology as super-structure. Conversely, the shallowness of the details of genealogy, the movement of a *baloma* spirit through unmarked time, and the power of women alone to reproduce *dala* identity function apart from the politics of men. The element that women control cannot be conceived as political ideology. Rather they form the very base of Trobriand society.

The distinction seems pertinent but the difference, if there is one, requires rather more, I think, than Dr Weiner has provided—or can be provided from empirical observations. The method of following exchanges from person to person through an intricate network of kin and affinal relationships can be made to serve many purposes, as though Dr Weiner knows the material throughout in what might be called a balanced and systematic way, the assumptions behind the praxis of exchange do not always emerge as convincing. Still, whether the matter has to do with land, exchange, marriage, ritual, ceremonies or the mythic past, Dr Weiner is always lucid and detailed. The Trobriand words *baloma* and *urigubu* have long been familiar to enthusiasts. We may now add *dala*. But let us hope that with this book, which fills in so many gaps and expands on so much, Trobriand studies will not become a genre of their own. Trobrianders are not nearly as exceptional in Melanesia as they were once thought to be, and there is much to be gained from following variations to inform us further on the deep structure. This, in turn, will surely help to determine more adequately why the variations occur in particular contexts.





# Taking the strain

## By Larzer Ziff

**ALBERT GELPI :**
**The Tenth Muse**
**The Psyche of the American Poet**
327pp. Harvard University Press. £11.25.

As this year has again shown, anthologies of American poetry continue to undergo rough handling from British reviewers. While they have become resigned to the peculiarities of the American novel—its character as "romance" rather than as "novel" in the nineteenth century, its blindly vigorous insistence that there are still big and serious matters to be treated in the novel in the twentieth century—British critics seem to know full well that a poem in English at least is a poem in English and should so be judged. With regard to verse they are determined the Americans will not pull the wool over their eyes by explaining, as they do with other writings, that one must consider the nature of the society.

Indeed, did not that great Missouri poet, T. S. Eliot, say it all when he followed up his remark that "people find the most conscious expression of their deepest feelings in the poetry of their own language" by saying that "the duty of the poet, as poet, is only indirectly to his people: his direct duty is to the *language*"? This pulls the rug out from under those who would plead special ways of reading an American poem, and, for emphasis, Eliot himself leapt nimbly off the American rug. Americans write poetry in English and the language takes precedence over the people. Why, then, should any sane heir of Milton and of Wordsworth have to put up with the likes of Edward Taylor and Ralph Waldo Emerson, let alone those even slighter poets who manage to find their way into the anthologies?

For a long period American scholars remained content, in the face of this, to produce collections of American poetry for use in native courses in the home literature or for use as anthropological exhibits abroad of the quaint products of the native craftsman. Stanley Cavell's discovery seemed just: "American culture has never really believed in its capacity to produce anything of permanent value—except itself. So it forever overpraises and undervalues its achievements."

In 1961, Roy Harvey Pearce published the first significant history of American verse, *The Continuity of American Poetry*, and in it argued that since language is a vehicle of values and the poet makes his language from the way it is spoken around him American poets do, indeed, have different duties (in Eliot's sense) from British poets. The continuity he saw running from Taylor to Wallace Stevens was one of the culture, and his theory of the way a poet is located in his culture (a theory that was, as he indicated, greatly indebted to the work of Américo Castro) freed him from the need to insist that American poets adhered to some version of a national aesthetic and also kept him from losing sight of relationships among the works he thought worthy of mention. He presented an attractive number of threads of continuity, most of them depending from his perception that all American poetry since Whitman "is, in essence, if not in substance, a series of arguments with Whitman".

Pearce's book was a valuable one to have in 1961 and it remains a valuable one today. Among other consequences it stimulated the reaction of Hyatt H. Waggoner whose *American Poets* appeared in 1968. Waggoner said that Pearce's theory of cultural continuity rated and classified poets "according to a contemporary ideology foreign to their own outlooks and poetic purposes". His own intention, he said, was to range over the American poets from the Puritans to the present, ruling each on his own terms. In the event, however, he became so struck with the centrality of Emerson as poet and thinker that he revised his draft so as to produce a shorter study—although one still over 600 pages—that followed an Emersonian model and spoke of "Representative Poets" as Emerson had written of "Representative Men".

Because of his empirical approach Waggoner's book is not so fluid as Pearce's but it does afford a tolerant and far more than tolerable guide to poets, poems, and schools. His contention that poets can be taken on their own terms rather than from the point of view of contemporary ideology is a bit artless, and he himself seems to disregard it immediately in his incisive and far from seventeenth-century evaluation of Puritan poetry. But his alertness to what of value even bad poets had to say does help the reader to a cumulative sense of the career of poets and poetry in America.

Unlike Pearce, Waggoner's method leaves him open to the cry: "But so much of this is wretched stuff!" His response is implicit on many a page, as, for instance, when he says of Edward Taylor: "Comparison of his work with Herbert's tends to the conclusion that Taylor's is hardly worth reading, being only a very inferior imitation; while comparison with Emerson makes him seem a sort of poetic pioneer."

Waggoner, then, leaves the choice of the value of reading a good deal of what he discusses up to us, and, as is abundantly clear, most American as well as British readers choose to disregard Taylor for Herbert because the category of "poetic pioneer", although it affords some knowledge, promises neither joy nor experience.

Albert Gelpi now contributes a third book to the small shelf of such histories, or, more precisely, a third and fourth book because *The Tenth Muse*, which concerns itself with American poetry before the twentieth century, will be followed by a book on the modern period. His principle of selection makes his predecessors look very comprehensive indeed. Waggoner sighed when he had to cut his book back to what he called representative poets but Gelpi stoutly believes he can do the prelude to the great twentieth-century authors through a central consideration of only five poets: Edward Taylor, Edgar Allan Poe, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Walt Whitman, and Emily Dickinson.

Gelpi's subtitle is "The Psyche of the American Poet", although his aim, he says, "was not to mount a vigorously or exclusively psychoanalytic investigation but to discern the elusive connection between the cultural situation and the psychological situation of the poets as those connections contributed to poetic theory and poetic practice during the formative period of American literature". Eventually, I feel, his aim wobbles, and when he comes to his two undoubtedly great poets, Whitman and Dickinson, the Jungian stream that always flowed strongly is allowed to swamp "the cultural situation". This, however, is all to the good because these two long chapters are the best things in the book.

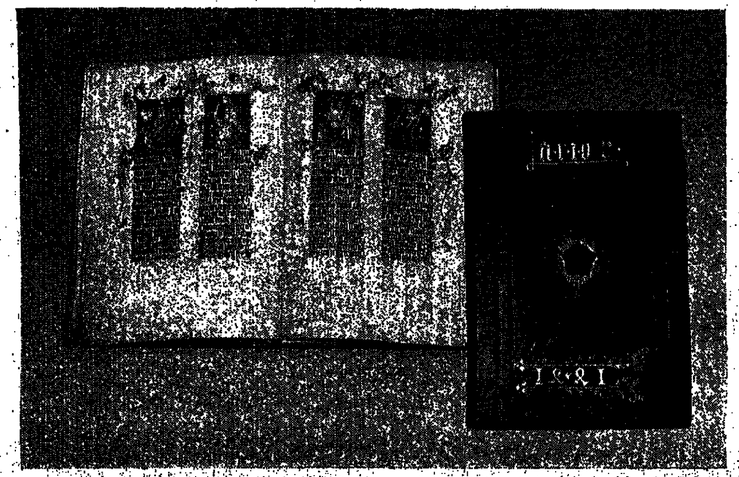
The immediate problem for Gelpi is again that all too familiar one of their being too few demonstrably good poems to consider: Taylor stands out only in relief against seventeenth-century American efforts at poetry—a trickle in a dry land; Poe wrote very few worthy poems although his influence was immense (but for this one must take him out of his immediate cultural situation and locate him in the history of modernism); Emerson fuelled Whitman, which we all know and for which we are immensely grateful, but fails to fuel us.

Gelpi faces such problems immediately when he acknowledges the countless faults of Taylor but, nevertheless, insists that there are lasting pleasures to be found in his poems, pleasures of a kind that Herbert does not provide. It is a brave try and since he is such a persuasive reader of poetry Gelpi convinced me while I was reading him; unfortunately, when I turned from his pages to the fuller Taylor my excitement cooled considerably. Still, his ability to trace the knots and snarls in Taylor's best poems back to their source in the poet's energetic self-involvement and forward to their occasional resolution in a personal idiom justified his commitment even though it will not, I suspect, add to Taylor's readership.

The Poe problem is less successfully overcome because, as I said, the context will not suffice; but Emerson is read with happy consequences. Gelpi's alertness to the psychic undercurrents in Emerson's Bacchic poems makes his discussion of them exciting. At times his seesawing between an observed line and what one or other contemporary psychological theorist has to say about symbols of which the line seems to offer an example is tiresome, if not forced, yet he happily allows himself for stretches to trust his own sense to illuminate what lies before him.

When he arrives at Whitman, Gelpi comes to the master writer of what is called the "open poem", and in common with others, notably Pound, who early identified this phenomenon and suggested it was a key to the distinctiveness of American verse, he looks at it both in itself and in the hundred-and-one roadsigns to the future of American poetry that it contains. The principal clue is taken from Pound, whose voice remains the most resonant in response to that of Eliot on the possibility of a separate kind of American poetry. Whitman, said Pound, was "ready to endure personally a strain which his craftsmanship would scarcely endure", and this is peculiar to the artists of his country. The American quality, Pound added, is that which "will undertake nothing in its art for which it will not be in person responsible".

Having accepted this clue, how-

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# To make the many one

**By William Pritchard**

**RICHARD P. SUGG:**
**Hart Crane's The Bridge**
A Description of its Life
127pp. University of Alabama Press. $6.50 (paperback $2.95).

To a reviewer who had been enthusiastic about *The Bridge*, Hart Crane wrote that although its "integrated unity and development" might not be immediately apparent, time and repeated readings would convince one of the poem's "essential unity". And he stated proudly that his poem was "at least as complicated in its structure and inferences as *The Waste Land*—perhaps more so". As with *The Waste Land*, criticism of Crane's poem may be just beginning to shuck off professorial habits of fussing about whether the longish poem is or isn't "unified", therefore a "failure" or no. So the heart does not leap up when Richard Sugg announces in the first chapter of his book on *The Bridge* (a chapter titled, ominously, "Hart Crane's Aesthetics"—as if "aesthetics" were the proper way into the poem) that it deserves "a closer study than it has previously been given", that it is "a record of one man's growth toward unity through history and place", "a poem about the creation of a poem", and that it teaches us how to live life "according to the laws of the imagination". One is hardly tempted to agree or disagree with such statements about what *The Bridge* is, essentially; but it is clear from the outset that the critic is determined to put it all together into the big picture.

It is not clear, however, that "a closer study" is what *The Bridge* deserves or needs. There is an excellent American "casebook" of essays on the poem, edited by David R. Clark, which contains the standard items by Winters and Tate, as well as later contributions by, among others, Unterecker, Tuckerberg and Dembo (whose full-length book on the poem is a workmanlike job). Thirty years ago Brom Weber concluded his critical biography of Crane with a thorough analysis of the poem; and more recently—for some reason unacknowledged by Mr Sugg—there has been an intelligent, extended treatment of not only the poem but its critics as well as by Eugene Paul Nassar (in *The Rape of Cinderella*, 1970).

What does Mr Sugg have to add to all this secondary material? He has first of all a key word of somewhat archaic and dubious stature: "unitive". The word recurs countless times; there is unitive act, unitive truth, unitive meaning, unitive state, unitive nature and vision and urge. There is also, so Mr Sugg finds, much paradoxical and symbolical import in the poem, which unfortunately teases him into writing sentences like this: "The device of paradox is admirably suited to the rendering of a vital and living art, generating as it does a unitive meaning implicit in the dualities in yokes"; or this: "The symbolic circle of the unitive vision is suggested in the image of 'diametric gaze', and the paradox of 'tranquil with the blaze' renders the unity of opposites which characterizes the symbolic circle." After which the reader concludes, with W. C. Fields, that he would much rather be in Philadelphia, and this makes it difficult to pay close attention even when Mr Sugg engages in less laboured exposition.

Really Mr Sugg's problem is that, caught up in his excitement about the glories of a "unitive" vision, he can do no less than swallow *The Bridge* whole; since every part can be fitted into the larger symbolic picture then it must all be marvellous and Crane himself correct when he postulated its "essential unity". But surely Crane, like Eliot in relation to *The Waste Land*, was nervous about whether and to what degree *The Bridge* in fact cohered, thus tended to assure readers that it was much more than a collection of brilliant lyrics. And surely, so it seems to me, useful criticism of the poem should be interested in making distinctions among its parts, complicating our response to the fine rhetoric of "To Brooklyn Bridge" or the splendid end of "The River" with more problematical or tedious stretches—as in the high-fidelity broadcasting of "Cape Hatteras" and the closing "Atlantis". Even more challengingly, there is the question of Crane's tonal range, his ability (or lack of it) to capture different kinds of emotional intensities; his attempt to impose sonata Columbus (in "Ave Maria") or a boy growing up in the American midwest ("Behind/My father's cannery works I used to see/Rail-squatters nosing in nomad raillery") or a mother saying goodbye to her son (in the often-deplored "Indiana" which I don't find so deplorable) or the performing manipulator of "cinemas, panoramic sleights" in "The Tunnel". And then there are those moments of fading away when the voice is overtaken by silence, as in the lovely, "The Harbour Dawn" or the end of "Quaker Hill".

In writing about the poem then one cannot afford not to be "aesthetic" and impressionistic in the attempt to supply a critical statement of what it feels like to read Crane's words. If there are difficulties and obscurities in the poem, and there are, best to name them rather than pretending they can be ironed out into unity, no wrinkles left. So when Brom Weber begins his commentary on "The Dance" by remarking that "it is difficult to keep track of the symbolism and the imagery is extremely elusive", I receive more confirmation of my reading experience than from all the pages of Mr Sugg's book. And Yvor Winters's remark, made in his invaluable review of *The Bridge*, that the poem's difficulties are likely to clear up "in a measure with familiarity" is worth pondering, since my own experience is that increased familiarity with Crane's poetry leads not to clarity of symbolic reference, to lucid interconnection of parts—but rather to a hypnotic attachment to the words themselves, to successions of lines whose power is intoxicant, symbolist rather than symbolic:

Poised wholly on its dream, a mustard glow,
Tortured with history, its one will—flow!

Mr Sugg refers to Winters only once, at the very beginning of his book, coupling him with Allen Tate as early critics of *The Bridge* who found it a failed epic; and he implies that it is time now to move beyond this blinkered vision. But in fact they wrote perhaps the best criticism Crane has ever received, and in Winters's case particularly it was a matter of being willing to make discriminations, say yes here and no there. "The poem is composed mainly of unfused doctrine and is excited rather than dynamic", Winters firmly declared. He went on to suggest by 1 example that the task of critics was to consider how fusion does occur, when it does, and how the poem then becomes "a thing of rhythmic" (A. Alvarez's phrase) "pure electricity". The idea! place to conduct such an investigation is a classroom where one can read aloud, pause, reread, try out different formulations. Though the investigation is more difficult to conduct in print, it would certainly be a very different endeavour from attempting to demonstrate and promulgate the "unitive" nature of Crane's strange and formidable poem.

Stephen Fonder introduces *American Long Poem: an Annotated Selection* (254pp. Edward Arnold. £8.95; paperback, £3.95) with a quotation from Emerson's New World poetry: "America is a poem in our eyes; its mere geography dazzles the imagination and it will not wait long for meters." The poems included are three by Whitman, Crane's *The Bridge*, four *Cantos* by Pound, Wallace Stevens's *Notes towards a Supreme Fiction*, and William Carlos Williams's *Paterson*. Book-length poems exemplify a wish to strip away European cultural accretions and write open-ended, apocalyptic, self-



# A mixed schooling

**By Michael Laird**

**AUSTIN A. D'SOUZA:**
**Anglo-Indian Education**
A Study of Its Origins and Growth in Bengal up to 1960
344pp. Delhi: Oxford University Press. £6.95.

At least down to 1947 the term "Anglo-Indian education" signified education provided for and to some extent by the Anglo-Indian community, a Eurasian minority resident in India descended from Indian mothers and European fathers—mainly Portuguese during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries and British thereafter. The first chapter in *Anglo-Indian Education* is a useful survey of the history of the community through its vicissitudes since 1498. The Portuguese end at first the English positively encouraged intermarriage in the belief that Eurasians would prove helpful to the imperial power; then followed a "dark period" in the early nineteenth century due partly to British East India Company fears that there was a danger of a "creole rebellion" along Latin American lines. The fortunes of the community revived however—their loyalty in 1857 helped—to the point where they were able to play a kind of NCO role during the last century of the Raj. They found new opportunities of employment, particularly in the railways, telegraph and other technical branches of government service, and their loyalty to the British and alienation from Indian society became confirmed, indeed almost proverbial.

The progress of the Indian national movement and the prospect of independence was therefore disturbing—but Austin D'Souza emphasizes that, although many preferred to emigrate, the community as a whole learnt to adapt itself in time and to accept a new identification with its motherland; and the leadership of independent India responded magnanimously.

Against this background D'Souza then examines the history of the community's schools in Bengal. Their founders were extremely various: philanthropic chaplains; missionary societies and churches; ex-soldiers and other individuals who turned to teaching as a way of earning a living; and from the 1820s, Anglo-Indian organizations themselves, determined to improve the position of the community and seeing education as a vital means to that end. Some of those schools did not last long; others have survived to this day. All kinds of schools developed: for boys and for girls; orphanages and free schools; and schools demanding relatively high fees and serving the well-to-do section of the community. These latter, whether situated in the cities of the plain or in the hills, came to predominate.

They were Christian schools; and they tended to look to English public and grammar schools as models to imitate, thus in the twentieth century running into mounting criticism as essentially alien institutions out of touch with the mainstream of Indian life. One important index of this was their very half-hearted approach to the teaching of Indian languages and of Indian history and geography: they were urged to take these more seriously in the 1880s, but were still being criticized on this point in the 1940s.

Around 1947 there was some fear that these schools would not survive in an independent India; but at least in West Bengal they did in fact take on a new lease of life. They had never excluded Indian non-Christian children altogether, though as D'Souza rather belatedly makes clear these were a very small minority at the beginning of the twentieth century. After 1947 however they found a new clientele in the shape of the affluent section of the Indian middle classes: officials, military officers and businessmen struggled to send their children to these schools. Their enrolment increased greatly and they must now be making an important contribution to the development of the Anglicized elite of modern India.

This is a useful book, though somewhat repetitive and therefore over-long. It is puzzling too that, while the date of publication is given as 1976, internal evidence suggests that it was written in the early 1960s. If it was in fact written more recently, some indication could have been given about how the schools fared after 1960. The book is based on secondary works and official reports, and an important dimension is lacking as a result: it is very much a view of these schools by educationists and officials, and we never seem really to get inside them, to understand how conditions appeared to those who passed through them. One realizes the difficulties in the way of doing this properly, but it is a pity that no effort was made to get something of a pupil's perspective. This would have been particularly interesting as a test for all those rather smug claims—emanating of course from the schools themselves, and from approving officials—that the Anglo-Indian schools' special contribution to the Indian educational scene was in the realm of "character-formation", and the inculcation of "moral and spiritual values". No doubt such claims had some foundation, but D'Souza accepts them too uncritically.

# On the alert

**By John C. Dancy**

**PHILIP E. VERNON, GEORGINA ADAMSON and DOROTHY F. VERNON:**
**The Psychology and Education of Gifted Children**
216pp. Methuen. £5.95 (paperback, £2.95).

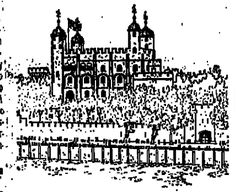
*The Psychology and Education of Gifted Children* is a sensible introduction to the problem of giftedness. "Gifted" is here used to designate the top 2 per cent of the population—in IQ terms, 130-plus. The book surveys the problems and the proposed solutions in a balanced way. Though aimed at "teachers who are being trained for work with the gifted", it is written at a fairly non-technical level and could be useful to any interested teacher or parent.

The problems of giftedness are of two kinds, practical and theoretical, which the authors treat in reverse order. The practical problems, Eric Hoyle has written, derive from the fact that "in the schools of today . . . inexperienced teachers . . . working with mixed-ability classes may gear the level and pace of teaching to . . . pupils of average ability, with the consequence that any gifted pupil in the class will . . . produce poor work because little is expected"—and, what is more, he may be bored to tears (or worse) in the process. In the last resort, only the individual classroom teacher can solve this problem; but in order to solve it he needs a great deal of support. He must be alerted to its existence, strengthened to admit that in his own classes there are probably two or three children more "gifted" than he, and guided in the various procedures by which, at relatively little cost, these gifts can be detected and nourished.

As to the theoretical problems of giftedness, St Paul laid down the original research programme by his observation that "there are diversities of gifts but the same spirit". Philip and Dorothy Vernon record recent attempts to identify both the diversities and the spirit. Unfortunately, the attempts have been largely unsuccessful. Nor is this surprising. The anecdotal approach may be unscholarly, but if ever a phenomenon was resistant to statistical analysis, it is giftedness. Even if we confine ourselves to gifts of pure intellect, and forget those of creativity or execution, IQ tests are altogether too crude to do justice to the complexity of the situation. There are grounds for thinking that the highly intelligent (140+) are many times more numerous than would be expected from the normal distribution which the tests themselves assume. The apparently even progression from IQ 100 to 140+ conceals discontinuities which any experienced teacher of the gifted can recognize. And when Lewis Terman seeks to allow for this complexity by distinguishing 120 kinds of intellectual abilities, the Vernons can (rightly) say that "this model of intellect seems too elaborate to have much practical application". What we lack, in fact, is a unifying theory to occupy the middle position between anecdote and arithmetic.

The Vernons make no claim to provide such a theory. What they give is a respectable survey of relevant work on both sides of the Atlantic. They are stronger on North America than on the United Kingdom; for example, they appear not to know Alice Heim's tests (AH4 and AH5), nor Hoyle's excellent DES pamphlet *Gifted Children and Their Education* (1964); and they devote only eight lines to setting, which is still the commonest procedure here for dealing with giftedness. But they are humane: they have a care for what upsets people, and many of their sentences have personal subjects. Their style is largely free of jargon, though also innocent of felicity. Books on giftedness tend to suffer, like books on humour, from the contrast between their matter and their manner.

*School and Society: A Sociological Reader* (266pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul in association with The Open University. £5.50; paperback, £2.75) includes passages from the works of Durkheim, Althusser, T. S. Eliot, Marx, Mannheim, Basil Bernstein, C. Wright Mills and Noam Chomsky. The book, which first appeared in 1971 and is now in its second edition, was prepared for the Schooling and Society Course at The Open University.

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# In the wake of the plunderers

## By Cyril Aldred

BRIAN M. FAGAN:
**The Rape of the Nile**
399pp. Macdonald and June's. £6.95.

Under a somewhat melodramatic title, Brian W. Fagan, who is Professor of Anthropology in the University of California at Santa Barbara, has written what is virtually a popular and selective history of early Egyptology. He traces the European discovery of Ancient Egypt from the reports of travellers, from the days of Herodotus to the death of Flinders Petrie. He prefaces his account with a version of some of the relevant papyri concerning the tomb-robberies that were the subject of a royal commission in the days of Ramesses IX (c. 1133 BC) and he uses these reports to point his moral that the monuments of Egypt have been under siege ever since they were built (though in this respect they are hardly unique). In particular he claims that during the past two thousand years, Ancient Egypt has effectively been destroyed, both by the Egyptians themselves, motivated by greed, and by foreigners who have been driven by dreams of treasure and wealth and the desire to own the exotic. According to him the loss to archaeology is incalculable and to Egyptian history even more staggering.

Actually of course it has not only been the intervention of foreigners that has contributed to the destruction of Egypt's past. The incomparable loss of the Library of Alexandria was the outcome of civil strife between its inhabitants before the birth of Christ. Native zealots in early Christian days thoroughly desecrated the standing monuments of their pagan ancestors. In Islamic times ancient buildings have been quarried to build mosques, citadels and sugar-factories, or have been burnt to produce lime. The mud-brick of extensive city ruins has been carted away in the past few decades by peasants as fertilizer for their fields. Compared with such disasters, the damage done in the past century and a half by incompetent excavators and voracious collectors is almost negligible. For these reasons I find the author's indignation a little misplaced, though Professor Fagan does much in his closing pages to produce a more balanced judgment.

The modern discovery of Egypt began in 1798, when Napoleon brought in the baggage-train of his invading army a scientific *équipe* which investigated and reported many aspects of ancient and contemporary Egypt, thus setting an example for later missions to follow throughout the nineteenth century. It also opened up Egypt to European adventurers, whose operations resulted in the formation of collections of Egyptian antiquities in the museums of Paris, London, Berlin, Turin and Leyden, and awakened the intellectual curiosity of scholars and public alike. Without the stimulus that such collections provided, and continue to encourage, it is doubtful whether the progress of Egyptology would have been so rapid and far-reaching, or have been long sustained.

Many of the early consular officials and their minions were colourful characters of great drive and resource and with more than a dash of rascality. A great part of *The Rape of the Nile* is taken up with the exploits of the most communicative of them, Giovanni Belzoni, the Italian giant who fled from his native Padua to Rome and London in 1803, and earned a precarious living as a circus strongman before going to Egypt in 1814 to demonstrate a hydraulic machine of his own invention. When this device failed, he stayed to excavate on behalf of the British Consul, Henry Salt, and soon found himself at loggerheads with his arch-rival the French Consul, another Italian, Bernardino Drovetti. Belzoni's *Narrative* of his operations in Egypt and Nubia is an entertaining account of his exploits, trials and tribulations. He pays the penalty of his frankness in being dubbed by Professor Fagan as the Greatest Plunderer of Them All, though it is doubtful if he excelled Drovetti in this respect.

In their defence and that of their followers, it could be claimed that their motives were the preservation and exhibition of the works of antiquity, however imperfect their methods may have been according to modern standards, at the time when they functioned, their operations were not illicit. No such excuse can apply to those who today are looting Indian temples, or Mayan sites, or Etruscan cemeteries.

It was not until 1835 that Mohammed Ali, largely as a result of the representations of Europeans like Champollion, issued an ordinance forbidding the export of antiquities, and authorizing the establishment of a museum in Cairo and an antiquities service with its essential inspectorate. This decree, however, remained a dead letter until 1858, when the young and energetic Auguste Mariette was appointed Conservateur of Monuments by Said Pasha. The excursions of Mariette, and his successor, Gaston Maspero, securely laid the foundations of the present Antiquities Service, in which Egyptians have now replaced European officials in controlling the ancient monuments and historic sites, and in regulating excavations.

The rest of Professor Fagan's book is concerned with some of the travellers, explorers and archaeologists, many of them individualists of an engagingly eccentric kind, who played their part in bringing Egypt's past to light during the nineteenth century. He pays a proper tribute to those other Europeans whose honourable and invaluable labours are often ignored in the sensationalism that surrounds the exploits of their rapacious contemporaries. These are the artists and draughtsmen who recorded the standing monuments of Egypt with an ever greater degree of accuracy.

In this work, which still continues, an important part has been played by the Egypt Exploration Fund (now Society) which was founded in 1882, largely by the energy and enthusiasm of the Victorian novelist Amelia Edwards, who like so many visitors to Old Nile, fell in love with Egyptian antiquity as the result of a voyage which she made there in 1873-74. The Society was the first society supported by voluntary contributions from the general public to engage in the scientific exploration of Egypt and the proper publication of its finds.

A young surveyor, Flinders Petrie, was employed in the earlier years of the Fund and introduced many new ideas and techniques into field excavations in Egypt. His long career in Egyptology saw the replacement of the old commanding methods of the earlier *déblayeurs* by modern scientific skills.

Professor Fagan's account is entertainingly written and can be recommended to the general reader for the many attractive and evocative illustrations. Of course the author has not been able to avoid all the pitfalls that lined the path of those who venture into writing about Egypt, even the specialists; and in the interests of accuracy for a second edition, apart from correcting a few obvious misprints, Professor Fagan would do well to replace the inaccurate map on page ix; to unscramble the muddled details of the tomb-robbery reports on page 8; to identify the mosque illustrated on page 37 as that of er-Rifa'i; and to amend the caption on page 129 so as to absolve Belzoni from moving the fallen colossus in the Ramesseum (it is still there). On page 255 the roof of the Denderah temple is said to be of granite whereas it is of sandstone; on pages 339 and 347 Petrie is accredited with an expedition to the temple at Deir el Bahri, whereas it was Naville who operated there. He is also claimed as the discoverer of the "remarkable Amarnah correspondence" in 1891, whereas he unearthed about a score of fragments left behind by the natives who had found the tablets four years earlier. Such slips, however, are not likely to vex the general reader or to lead him seriously astray.

# News from Saqqara

## By Kenneth Kitchen

J. D. RAY:
**The Archive of Hor**
192pp with 39 plates. Egypt Exploration Society. £30.

During the past fourteen years, the Egypt Exploration Society has conducted a highly successful series of excavations at North Saqqara, part of the burial-ground of the ancient Egyptian metropolis of Memphis. During the last four centuries BC, especially under the Ptolemies, this part of Saqqara was devoted to the cults and burials of the sacred animals: the Apis-bull of Ptah of Memphis, the cows that mothered the Apis-bulls, the cats of the goddess Baster, the dogs of the embalmer-god Anubis, and—by the million—the ibises of Thoth, god of wisdom. Temples for these cults, vast subterranean vaults for the burials, establishments for embalming, compounds for the upkeep of these living images of deity, all required a bustling local population of priests, administrators, service-personnel. Such cults came under some state patronage; they enjoyed popular favour. It was a world of pilgrims, magicians, interpreters of oracles of the deity, not least through dreams induced by incubation.

A mass of fragmentary documents in at least three scripts and languages—Greek, Egyptian (in Demotic cursive script), Aramaic—sheds vivid light on life in Ptolemaic north Saqqara. Three years ago, H. S. Smith gave a highly entertaining over-view of that life in his brilliantly sketched *A Visit to Ancient Egypt*. The present volume is the first instalment of the definitive reports on the rich material hitherto reported in outline. Five potsherds inscribed in Greek and sixty-five more in Demotic constitute "the archive of Hor". These are, in fact, more the rough drafts from Hor's waste-paper basket than the archive proper (as their editor points out). But, from behind the outer appearance of a heap of broken sherds in often barely legible script, J. D. Ray has deftly conjured a remarkable tableau.

The central character, Hor, was an Egyptian born in the central Delta about 200 BC. From being a devotee of the goddess Isis, he was called to serve Thoth, and so moved in the precincts of the sacred ibis at Saqqara North. His notes unveil an observer's first-hand view of international politics, religious experience, administrative corruption and reform, in the tumultuous decade 170-160 BC. Hor was a direct contemporary of the invasions of Egypt in 170-168 by Antiochus IV Epiphanes, who is mentioned by name in these texts, together with the Seleucid retreat under Roman pressure, and the consequent Egyptian "thank-you" embassy to Rome—which city finds here its earliest mention in an Egyptian text. Hor himself had proclaimed the coming retreat, but was not believed until his prediction was fulfilled. He then was called in to proclaim deliverance to Ptolemy VI Philometor, his queen and brother at the Alexandrian Serapeum. Precise dates are given for Antiochus's retreat, plus the detail that he left "sulking". What is more, incidental details make it increasingly certain that, while in control of Memphis, Antiochus IV *did* act as a pharaoh, however briefly.

This political aspect of Hor's archive is vivid enough, but is equalled in interest by other aspects. It is fascinating to see his vigorous complaints against corruption in the administration of the sacred ibises and their funerary rites, complaints that led to reforms at first ineffectual, then effective. In one episode, six men faced imprisonment at the hands of the council of the great temple of Ptah. Another, more bizarre, aspect is that of the world of Hor's dreams and the interpretation of oracular visions. The purpose of the whole mass of jottings was seemingly to serve as basic drafts for a long legal petition on papyrus, by which Hor intended to approach his sovereign over grievances—again, trouble for the ibis cult?

The whole series of documents is set out impeccably, each transcribed, translated and annotated, and their import then clearly elucidated, with a synoptic commentary on the whole. A chronological chart and sketch-maps of North Saqqara, plus full indexes, assist the user.

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## By John W. Hiden

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Ein Beispiel deutscher Volkstumsarbeit zwischen den Weltkriegen
154pp. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner. DM 48.

The German abroad, or *Auslandsdeutsche*, was a much studied phenomenon in the Weimar Republic. Although the earliest attempts to describe the life and conditions of Germans living outside the Reich go back to the early part of the nineteenth century, the First World War was the event which really sparked off the interests of Germans at home in the problem of the *Auslandsdeutsche*. Organizations concerned with the health and wealth of Germans abroad mushroomed in the war and immediate post-war years. Some were official, some semi-official. Their work was not properly coordinated, they often duplicated each other's activities and frequently struggled between themselves to define their special areas of competence. None the less the amount of energy which the organizations and leaders put into the cause of Germandom was immense. Surprisingly, this activity has found little reflection in the products of recent historical research. What studies do exist tend to concentrate on the role of specific German minorities in the bilateral relations between the German state and the host country. Of the various institutes and organizations inside the Reich which cared for the *Auslandsdeutsche*, only a handful have received detailed attention.

For such reasons alone, Ernst Ritter's study of the *Deutsche Ausland-Institut* (DAI) is a useful addition to the literature. Reservations about the book have nothing to do with its scholarship, which is impressive. They stem rather from the feeling that a study of the DAI cannot quite bear the weight of some of the general conclusions which are drawn about the nature of the *Auslandsdeutsche* problem. Indeed, Ritter expressly refers to the way in which the DAI differed from most of the other organizations concerned with Germandom. In the first place, it made a more conscious effort to be apolitical.

Although the "above party" image was sought by most of the workers in this field, the majority of the organizations were of a conservative-rightist complexion. The DAI aimed above all to be a centre of education and information about the *Auslandsdeutsche*, from the moment it was founded in January 1917. Its life centre, as it were, was its impressive library and archive holdings. The German Foreign Office (which along with the Ministry of Interior provided some of the DAI finance although it was attached to the Württemberg Ministry of Culture) saw the DAI as a "*Wissenschaftsinstitut*". According to another study of the *Auslandsdeutsche* problem (N. Krekeler, *Revisionsanspruch und geheime Ostpolitik*, 1973) the DAI was in the mere 10 per cent left after the other big organizations had taken their share of the action in the *Auslandsdeutsche* movement.

Thus, although Ritter is admirably comprehensive in his catalogue of the DAI's activities, his conclusions on the theory and purpose of the DAI cannot automatically be extended to other areas of Germany's nationality policies in the inter-war years. As a matter of fact, the DAI's vision of moderation and long-term cooperation between Germans abroad and their host countries was common to large sectors of the movement for the care of the *Auslandsdeutsche*. This emphasis is a necessary correction to the continuing tendency to see Germans abroad as a sort of fifth column, as part of the long arm of German foreign policy, soldiers in the cause of militant revisionism after the Treaty of Versailles in 1919. The uncomfortable fact remains that some leaders in the movement for the care of Germans abroad did see matters in this light. More important, however, was the fact that the concern of the *Auslandsdeutsche* organizations for German culture, for the separate identity of German minorities abroad, for the development of their national self-consciousness, had undeniable affinities with more unpleasant doctrines at the extreme right of the political spectrum.

Although the Nazi Party did not pursue a very active nationality policy before 1933, the ease with which it took over the organizational structure of the *Auslandsdeutsche* movement after Hitler's seizure of power raises some rather uncomfortable questions. Was this evidence that the organizations concerned with Germandom in the Weimar Republic were a vital precondition of Nazi nationality policies? Or was there a gigantic misunderstanding of the nature of Nazi racial policy by the leaders in the *Auslandsdeutsche* movement? Did these men work on hoping to preserve their long-term ideals but ever more disillusioned by the development of Nazi doctrine until they went down before the party's own offices concerned with the care of Germans abroad? By and large, Ritter supports the latter argument from his study of the DAI. Yet, the DAI is again made to appear as a rather special case. At the end of 1933 the Nazi regime finally got round to doing something about coordinating the work of the various organizations concerned with Germans abroad. They set up a secret council (*Volksdeutscher Rat*) but the DAI was not one of the organizations invited to send representatives. It was said to be too far from Berlin and was apparently thought of more as a regional centre and depot for material on the *Auslandsdeutsche*.

Ritter is able to avoid any extended discussion of the larger issues raised by dwelling more on the institutional development of the DAI after 1933. Its leaders were changed. President Wannor, its founder, and General Secretary Wertheimer, the celebrated writer on minority problems, were replaced. The rest of the story concerns the DAI's determined survival, the passing years marked by growing resistance from the Nazi party's own organizations. What independence it could enjoy stemmed from the continuing institutional disputes in the Third Reich, from the variety of governmental agencies drawing on the DAI's information and education services, and, it must be said, from the fact that it was not exactly a heavyweight. Inevitably, however, greater limits were imposed on the Germandom organizations as the foreign policy situation of the Third Reich improved. When war broke out, the DAI played an important role in documenting the great resettlement schemes — the Nazi method of dealing with the problem of Germans abroad. By 1943 the DAI was formally put under the SS-dominated *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle*. After the war there was no "*Auslandsdeutsche*" problem to speak of, Germans abroad had either been removed or resettled or ruthlessly assimilated. This was not quite what the Weimar *Auslandsdeutsche* organizations had had in mind. Ritter's impressive description of the DAI gives tantalizing glimpses of how this situation was reached but many more studies are needed of other institutions and leaders before we can fully understand it.

# The left liberals

## By David Blackbourn

JAMES CLARK HUNT:
**The People's Party in Württemberg and Southern Germany, 1890-1914**
203pp. Stuttgart: Klett. DM 48.

Historians are paying increasing attention to the political parties of the second German Reich. One result is that it is no longer possible to view the weakness of German liberalism, the "liberal lacuna" in the political spectrum, simply as the by-product of cynical Bismarckian calculation between 1866 and 1871. Liberals, after all, dominated the new Reichstag in the 1870s, and some of the state parliaments for considerably longer. Their subsequent loss of popular support and a political outlook edge derived from a process both protracted and uneven.

James C. Hunt has now provided us with a comprehensive account of the left liberal People's Party in southern Germany, concentrating particularly on Württemberg. The historic beneficiary of anti-statist, lower-middle-class radicalism, the party was the largest in that state from 1895 to 1906, and provided the driving force behind important constitutional, educational and fiscal reforms. Yet it was electorally vulnerable. Its greatest strength was in the small towns where class differences were least sharply felt, but industrialization on the one hand and agriculture on the other whittled away the middle ground.

The result was a steady loss of working-class votes to the social democratic left and rural votes to the agrarian conservative right. At the same time the formation of a local Centre Party prevented the People's Party from harnessing the Catholic electorate (although here Professor Hunt takes too little account of the economic and social, as well as clerical, grounds for the alienation of small-town Catholics from left liberalism). Each of these rival parties successfully played the anti-statist protest card against a People's Party now tainted with plain governmentalism.

Like left liberals elsewhere, the People's Party was to some extent able to check electoral decline by means of a growing appeal to parts of the white-collar and professional classes. But it still needed coalition partners to be politically effective, and in a series of blow-by-blow accounts of its fruitless search for allies among the other parties the author has illuminated one of the most striking flaws in the German political system before 1914. Unification "from above" had not only failed to resolve, but had actually exacerbated, many of the superimposed conflicts in Germany: between centralism and particularism, clericalism and anti-clericalism, town and country, capital and labour. The political outcome was the continued existence of a chronically segmented set of party blocs, often divided within themselves (as both left and right-wing liberals were). It therefore proved very difficult for the parties to cooperate at national or at state level in putting pressure on non-responsible governments, and they were confirmed instead as the vehicles of sectional interests.

Professor Hunt's publishers describe his work as "an intensive study in the ecology of political action", and a preoccupation with the formal elements of pure politicking is perhaps its principal weakness. Town hall pacts, electoral run-off agreements and conference resolutions dominate the second part of this slim volume, catalogued with a grim relentlessness which makes them at times difficult to follow. Despite this, and the unfortunate absence of an index, the book is a source of much extremely useful material. It is also an indication of how much can be learnt from a reconstruction of how politics operated at the periphery, as well as at the centre.

*Social Democratic Parties in Western Europe*, edited by William E. Paterson and Alastair H. Thomas, is a collection of essays first given as papers at a conference at Bruntingham University in 1974 (444pp. Croom Helm. £9.95). In their introduction, the editors argue that the major problem for the Social Democratic parties is the securing of not merely a political but also a social and economic consensus for the values they represent. They suggest that since party members are "almost by definition" atypical of the wider electorate, tensions arises between satisfying their demands and securing a wider consensus. Tension between competing goals, they conclude, is a permanent condition of social democracy. The book includes a full and up-to-date account of the parties' membership in the various countries and of their electoral support.

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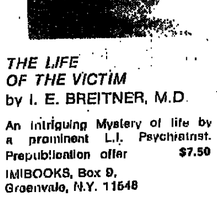

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Philip Goodall

# The social and the spiritual

**By R. L. de Lavigne**

WILLIAM C. JORDAN, BRUCE McNAB and TEOFILO F. RUIZ (Editors):

**Order and Innovation in the Middle Ages**

582pp. Princeton University Press. £13.90.

It is the natural outcome of the career of a truly international scholar such as the American medievalist, Professor J. R. Strayer, that a collection of essays should be published in his honour. Despite the heterogeneity of the essays, the editors have managed to place the twenty-five offerings within five groups. The first group, "Organization and Administration in Medieval Government", opens with a discussion by E. Kreisler of the manner in which Domesday Book was constructed. The solution of this problem would throw a flood of light on the reasons for making the survey. Working mainly on Kentish evidence, he suggests that the commissioners, faced with the impossibility of making hundredal returns throughout the country, used both previous geld-books and Anglo-Norman books of tenure. This would explain the ambiguity of the completed survey.

G. Constable attempts to destroy the myth of the centralization of the Cluniac order in the twelfth century. Only the personal control by the abbots of Cluny of the monks in those houses linked with Cluny provided any real cohesion. J. Freed discusses the extent to which the provincial organization of the mendicant orders helped in the formation of political boundaries in the thirteenth century. He shows, for example, that the mendicants developed an idea of Austrian unity well before the Habsburgs. One is, however, astounded to learn that the French were already thinking of the Rhine as their natural frontier.

C. Radding examines the claim that it was the incompetence of the collectors of taxes in Charles V's reign, as much as the burden of the taxes themselves, which led to great unrest in France in the 1380s. Judging both from the previous administrative experience and the subsequent careers of the 121 men he has identified in the administration of the aids in Normandy, 1360-1380, the hypothesis cannot be sustained. In discussing the diplomacy of the commune of Siena, c 1260-c 1350, W. Bowsky concludes that the policies of the smaller Italian communes cannot be properly understood if they are believed to have followed slavishly the policies of their great neighbours, in this case Florence.

In the second part, "Finance: Money and Prices", P. Wolff, looking at the monetary history of west Europe during the period of "feudal disorder", sharply reminds the reader that the coins in use may have been "good" currency. The proliferation of poorly struck seigneurial coinage, which was of low silver content, was an essential concomitant of economic growth in this period. T. Bisson's survey of the administration of some Templar holdings in Catalonia in the 1180s will interest only a few. Of R. Kaeuper's analysis of Edward I's financial problems in 1297, it may be thought that only his taking up of an aside by J. G. Edwards, suggesting that Edward's castle-building in Wales in the 1280s may have left him a legacy of debt, gives him an excuse for going over well-trodden ground.

In Part 3, "Medieval Trade and Urban Life", A. R. Lewis attempts to explain the failure of English shipping to break into the Mediterranean in the fourteenth century, at the time when the Italians were breaking out of it, in terms of their diplomatic relations between England and Castile. T. Ruiz, however, argues that, even in the early fourteenth century when diplomatic relations were good, the Castilians and not the English were the main carriers in the expanding trade between the two countries.

W. Jordan discloses how Louis IX tampered with trade routes in southern France in order to cheapen raw materials required in preparing for the departure of the Sixth Crusade from Aigues-Mortes. In conjunction with R. DeSognie's account in this collection of the early fourteenth-century friars of nearby Nîmes, and with J. Sablou's discussion of Louis's reasons for choosing Aigues-Mortes as his crusading port (see *Hommage à André Dupont*, Montpellier, 1974), Jordan gives us a far better insight into this case of an unsuccessful urban foundation. R. Baker argues powerfully that the Company of the Staple at Calais was not established in 1363 but curiously offers no alternative date. R. S. Lopez explores the importance of proxies in the development of medieval trade.

This section is concluded by a most interesting survey of uprisings in some Hanseatic towns, 1374-1416, by R. Rotz. It suggests that none of the explanations advanced for the multiplicity of uprisings in western Europe in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries is satisfactory. Those who have studied demand that a more subtle strategy of discussion be constructed. Rotz is perhaps unfair in failing to state that the tendency of historians to generalize derives largely from the fact that uprisings did occur in a marked chronological groups. He also seems unaware of recent writers who have attempted to produce more variegated typologies of revolt. Yet this is an article which suggests several fruitful avenues for exploration.

Part 4, "The Social Order", commences with a curiously dull illustration by B. Hill of the links between the Norman monastic house of Savigny and some local aristocratic families in the twelfth century. Much more interesting is P. Chevette's attempt to elucidate the nature of the control exercised by the Trencavels over their south western French lands, prior to the Albigensian Crusade, by reference to aerial photography. He raises some fundamental issues concerning the structure of Languedocian society. J. Rogozinski analyses enrollment by the later Capetians. The relatively few cases where the kings exercised this supposed royal monopoly reflect fundamentally different attitudes to nobility in the north and south of France. Most of the enrolled came from the Midi where those of urban origins could more easily gain acceptance from the established nobles. Only with Philip V can there be seen the foreshadowing of the creation of a nobility of robe in the royal court. Royal initiative made little difference to the composition of the second estate and thus to the concept of *nobilitas*.

This conclusion concurs with that of J. Benton in his examination in Part 2 of receipts, in the *bailliage* of Troyes, from fees of *nouveaux acquêts*: that is, payments to the crown by commoners for the right to hold noble fiefs. Both these authors, like others in this collection, place so much stress on the notion that Philip IV was a "constitutional king" that this idea, originally advanced by Professor Strayer, runs the risk of becoming a new and stultifying orthodoxy. This part closes with a survey of non-feudal arrays of the clergy in England, 1369-1413, by R. McNab. Such military service by the clergy raises some interesting social problems which require further probing.

In the last section, "Persons and Ethics: The Spirit of Whole", of the Middle Ages, L. Little provides some fascinating insights into the personality of Peter Damian. Though the edifice is built on shaky foundations, R. Lerner discusses the case of Gerard of Cremona, an "Angel of Philadelphia" condemned for heresy in Paris in 1187, whose case has previously gone unnoticed. E. Brown suggests that the later Capetians showed marked more concern for their salvation than for the financial problems of their successors.

C. T. Wood insists that, despite similarities in theories of kingship, there were by 1300 some important differences between France and England. In France the Fiction of heredity, backed by the Carolingian myth, had become strong. Thus the coronation ceremony had effectively come to reflect the process of election, also that contractual element between king and subjects had returned its importance in France. The Valois could therefore survive the madness of Charles VI, the Lancastrians could not survive that of Henry VI. Finally, Gaposchkin discusses an anonymous work of the later thirteenth century, produced probably by a student of Paris. This, by suggesting that certain public acts may be licit, though sinful, contains the first signs of the theory of *raison d'état*.

Inevitably the essays presented here are of uneven quality, but there is much of great interest in the collection must be welcomed as worthy of Professor Strayer.

# Propaganda in stone

**By Gordon Donaldson**

DAVID McROBERTS (Editor):

**The Medieval Church of St Andrews**

*178pp. Glasgow: John S. Burns and Sons.* £7. Obtainable from SCHA, 25 Finlay Street, Glasgow G22 5DS.

Seven articles which made up *Innes Review Volume 25* have been reissued, with a little supplementary information in appendixes and some well-chosen illustrations, to make an attractive book. Blue scholarship brings together what is known about the fabric and furnishings of a church which, with a length of 357 feet, was far the largest ever erected in Scotland. The implication of David McRoberts's own contribution, on "The Glorious House of St Andrew", is that the building, as an expression of the cult of Scotland's patron saint and its profound influence, was an outstanding example of propaganda in stone.

The subject is the medieval church, but M. O. Anderson, writing on "The Celtic Church in mind", carries us back into Dark Ages, and Mark Dilworth glances at the Reformation. The Augustinian canons of Andrews provided the rel church with a superintendent, ten ministers, and five reader exhorters.

Despite the thorough research—and its demonstration that Scottish records yield simple information to those who are willing to take the pains to use them—mysteries remain. Ronald Cant, in his article on "The Building of Andrews Cathedral", assumes others have done, that there central tower, though he concedes that it may have been carried higher than one storey above roof-level. But, while there undoubtedly plans for such a tower, was one ever built? The old-fashioned view of St Andrews as a production of which in comparison with the delights of this book, is only slender pinnacles on cathedral, in sharp contrast sturdy towers of the town's churches. It may be that cathedral never had a tower, simply because there nearby the 108-foot-high tower St Regulus (which Mr Cant accordance with recent fashion assigns to the 1070s). Was it economy, and not association and innate piety, explains the preservation of older tower? If so, St Andrews would parallel Dunblane, where earlier tower was preserved, extremely awkward relationship with a powerless cathedral. Brechin, where an ancient tower was similarly preserved.

The panoramic view is the subject of a note by Mr McRoberts, who would date the 1550s, between the end St Mary's College and "destruction" of the friary, much depends on how strictly that "destruction" was. Pure speculation might consider the appearance of the castle, which seems to be of later date than mid-sixteenth century.

The remaining mystery there is no record of any catastrophe which reduced great church to its present state. It had, however, been difficult to maintain even in evil times: the west front, guide of the south transept blown down in gales, there disastrous fire in 1378, the damage in military operations the building was not immune burglary and looting. One can what would probably happen there were no longer either custodians or funds for

# Saving the heathen

**By Rosalind Hill**

ROSAMOND McKITTERICK:

**The Frankish Church and the Carolingian Reforms 789-895**

236pp. Royal Historical Society. £6.25.

"The tenth century has a bad name, but good things come out of it." So wrote Helen Waddell fifty years ago in *The Wandering Scholars*. She was one of the few writers of her generation to appreciate the literary renaissance of the Carolingian period in its wider setting, its roots stretching back to Rome and Seville and Jarrow and its branches forward to link with the wider revival of the twelfth century. Since her death a great deal of work has been done on the period which used to be known as the Dark Ages, and few people would now dispute the immense debt which Charlemagne and his court owed to Rome or the profound influence, which they exerted on the intellectual and intellectual development of Western Europe.

In the field of religious history things are rather different. That we are the heirs of a great ecclesiastical tradition which grew up in the Middle Ages is clearly true, but the building of such a tradition is too often ascribed only to that powerful reforming movement in the papacy associated with the work of Gregory VII and Innocent III. The older institution of the "proprietary church", the alliance of king and bishop in which reform was often set in motion by royal legislation and carried out by bishops and priests working under lay protection, has tended to be disregarded as an attempt to adapt the church to barbarian society, a movement interesting in itself but insignificant for future development.

As Rosamond McKitterick shows in her valuable book, such an idea could not be more mistaken. The very strength of the Carolingian church lay in its power to enter into the workings of the barbarian mind. Where Bede and Boniface had shown the way, Frankish bishops and priests followed, translating the injunctions of Charlemagne's *Admonitio Generalis* into terms which the ordinary layman could understand.

As in Bede's Northumbria, they were faced with a multitude of converts "to whom no teacher had been sent, either to instruct them in the faith or to show them the difference between good and evil deeds". To this formidable task the Frankish clergy addressed themselves with courage and determination and a good deal of common sense, preaching and catechizing, driving into the heads of their congregations at least the *Paternoster* and the Creed, gradually weaning them from blood-feuds and the use of heathen charms, developing in them the love of God and their neighbours, and encouraging standards of moral and social behaviour which might with *advantage be followed today*.

Dr McKitterick's book is that of a sound scholar, thoroughly acquainted with her difficult material. It is also, I think, the work of a writer "who knows what she loves and loves what she knows". It sent one reader at least back to the early medieval religious writers with a deeper sense of their significance for the modern world. As Dr McKitterick says, the Carolingian reformers played no small part in creating that "society which is after all a fundamental part of what we think of as Western civilisation".



# The Iona school

**By Isabel Henderson**

K. A. STEER and J. W. M. BANNERMAN:

**Late Medieval Monumental Sculpture in the West Highlands**

230pp (with 43 plates). Edinburgh: HMSO for the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland. £14.50.

West Highland monumental sculpture has not been neglected. There have been several detailed regional studies, the most recent being the brief but lively account of the Islay sculptures by W. D. Lamont. In the book under review, forming part of the Commission's work on the *Inventory of Argyll*, the whole corpus of sculpture is re-examined by three experts. Their results comprise a major contribution to Scottish Gaelic studies.

Dr Kenneth Steer, to whom must go the credit for laying the groundwork of the survey, is responsible for the stylistic and iconographic analysis. He demonstrates that the old view that Iona held the monopoly of the manufacture of the monuments is wrong. This kind of sculpture certainly originated on Iona, but thereafter idiosyncrasies of style and content suggest that at least four other schools of carving were at work. Three clear diagnostic traits provide a framework for dating: the use of a new style of lettering for inscriptions, the depiction of the claymore, and the appearance of dog-tooth moulding, all take place about 1500. The concentration of monuments on Iona allows further chronological classification based mainly on leaf forms.

Dr Steer rightly stresses that the origins of the ornamental repertoire lie ultimately in Irish Romanesque art rather than in Early Christian Insular art. The plant scroll, the favourite motif of the West Highland sculptors, is unlikely to be a descendant of the Northumbrian vine-scroll as Dr Lamont suggested, and there is no reason to suppose that the hunting scenes and other animal representations have anything to do with Pictish art. The closest link with the earlier medieval period is the revival of interest in the free-standing cross, now however with a disc head and a crucifixion. Some of the finest monuments of the corpus are of this type. For these Dr Lamont favoured an Oronsay origin, on the basis of the location of the surviving crosses. Dr Steer, arguing from their ornament, links these elegant crosses firmly with the Iona school. This may remain an area of controversy.

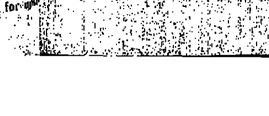
There are good things in Dr Steer's account of the imagery on the stones. Of particular interest is his study of the frequently represented Highland galley. He suggests that the technical detail of the galley on the remarkable MacLeod tomb at Rodel, Harris, precisely reflects a contemporary vessel, although galleys of this type had been long since abandoned elsewhere in Europe. This Scottish timeliness is true also of the armour represented on the monuments. Here Dr Steer, like J. R. Hunt in his recent study of Irish medieval effigies, believes that the armour shown is contemporary, the seemingly old-fashioned light armour being retained because it was most suited to the type of warfare in the area.

Dr John Bannerman has studied all the inscriptions on the monuments and other relevant material. Each of the inscriptions (there are over 100 of them) is given a full catalogue entry and detailed discussion. His identifications of the persons named are the result of exhaustive research in printed and manuscript sources. This exemplary work has revealed a whole new source for Gaelic genealogists and historians. His analyses shed light on a variety of matters such as patronage, the social background of those commemorated, the emergence of surnames, and the literacy of the carvers. Many of Dr Bannerman's catalogue entries are complete historical studies in themselves. For example, the simple inscription in Iona abbey church, "Donaldus Ó Brolchán made this work", leads to an important discussion of the religious life and building history of the abbey. In his account of the difficulties between the predatory and immoral monk Finguine and the sorely tried but resolute Dominic, abbot from 1421 to 1465, Dr Bannerman makes a very good case for Dominic having the latter responsible for the major restoration work of this period. Of great interest also is the discovery from the inscriptions that two Irish families of masons, the Ó Brolcháns and Ó Cuinns, were working on Iona over a considerable period on a hereditary basis. The origins of these families lie in a part of Ireland which was in the control of the Lordship of the Isles. It was the Lordship that provided the patronage for the sculpture and it was the decline of its influence towards the end of the fifteenth century which gradually brought production to an end rather than the Reformation. Dr Bannerman's appendix on the Lordship provides an authoritative historical background for the survey.

The thoroughness of the catalogue of inscriptions inevitably makes one regret that it was not possible to produce a complete descriptive catalogue of the monuments without inscriptions. For the basic facts about these monuments it will still be necessary to consult the individual volumes of the Commission's *Inventories*.

Mr Geoffrey Collins's appendix on the petrology of the monuments is of paramount importance, since his findings are also relevant to the sculpture of the Early Christian period. His account of his reasons for searching along the coast between Loch Craignish and Loch Sween, in order to try to locate the quarry from which the Iona sculptors obtained their favourite stonotype, makes exciting reading. The location of a quarry certainly used in medieval times at Doldo, Loch Sween, carrying with it the high probability that this was the quarry from which came the stone used for the eighth-century St John's Cross, is a major discovery.

Students of medieval Scotland have for some time heard tantalizing rumours of the results of this survey. Expectations have been more than met. Thinking of the grave-slabs that he had seen on Iona, Dr Johnson wrote ruefully that some of the graves "undoubtedly contain the remains of men who did not expect to be so soon forgotten". That they are now brought so vividly and circumstantially to mind is the splendid achievement of the Commission's work.

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Jürgen Lodemann, Stuttgarter Nachrichten

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*Illustrated Catalogue Price 40p*

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**Printed Books comprising Publishers' and other Trade Overstocks, End-of-Edition Runs and Remainders**

including books in the fields of History, Economics, Business Studies, Sociology, Politics, Bibliography and Librarianship, Typography, Literature, Biography, Humour, Art and Art History, Music, Limited Editions, etc., etc.
*Catalogue Price 50p*

MONDAY, OCTOBER 24 and following day at 11 am, at New Bond Street

**Printed Books including Hebrew Books**

the property of the late Sir James Williams-Drummond (removed from Hawthornden Castle), Mansfield College, Oxford, Mrs. Quentin Bell, and other owners, comprising English and Continental literature and history of the sixteenth to the nineteenth century, including Cervantes, *Don Quichotte, traduit par Florian*, 6 vol., morocco by Broxerian, 1798/9; Treherne, *Christian Ethicke*, 1675; an important collection of works by William Drummond of Hawthornden, including books from his library: Ben Jonson, *Workes*, 2 vol., with an elaborate inscription in Jonson's hand, 1616-40; travel and topography, including Norden, *Special Britannae pars. A . . . description of Cornwall*, 1728; Pliny, *The historie of the world*, 1601; Pitot, *The natural history of Staffordshire*, 1686; Russell and Price, *England displayed*, 2 vol., 1769; De la Condamine, *Journal du voyage à l'Equateur*, 6 works in 3 vol., 1751-54; Hebrew books, including Levita, *Tishbi*, 1541; *Megilla Esther*, manuscript on vellum, Italy, mid-eighteenth century; Shimon Ben Zemach Duran, *Tashbatz*, 1738; *Toldot Yakov Yoseph*, 1817; and Isserlein, *Termat Ha'deshen, 1519*.
*Illustrated Catalogue 60p*

WEDNESDAY, 26 OCTOBER, and following two days at 1 pm at Hodgson's Rooms

**English Illustrated Books of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries**

the property of the Cambridge Union Society, Mrs B. St. G. Matson, and other properties, including Wilde's Salome, illustrated by Beardsley, 1894; Beedle's Figures of British Land Birds, 1800, and Vignettes, 3 vol., c. 1830; Young's Night Thoughts, 1797, illustrated by William Blake, and his illustrations to the Book of Job, 1825, and those for Thornton's Pastorals of Virgil, 1821; Morris's Well at the World's End, 1896 and the Kelmscott Chaucer, 1896, illustrated by Burne-Jones; The Century Guild Hobby Horse no. 1-28, 1886-92, and a presentation copy of the first no., 1884; Russell Flint's Drawings, with a signed drawing by the artist, 1950; Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde, 1927, and Canterbury Tales, 4 vol., 1929-31, illustrated by Eric Gill; Hogarth's Works, 1822; Wyndham Lewis's Timon of Athens, 1914; Milton's Paradise Lost, 2 vol., illustrated by John Martin, 1827; Palmer's Eclogues of Virgil, 1883; Kennedy's The Excited Works of Whistler, 8 vol., New York, 1910; and others illustrated by Beerbohm, Brangwyn, Buckland Wright, Caldecott, Harry Clarke, Crane, Dore, Dulac, Gibbings, Owen Jones, Jessie M. King, Ron King, Norman Lindsey, Mackenzie, John and Paul Nash, Nielsen, Pogany, Rackham, Ricketts, Charles and W. Heath Robinson, Timlin, and others; sketch books by Randolph Caldecott, and watercolours by Dulac, Annie French, Rackham, W. Heath Robinson, and others.
*Catalogue £1.00*

MONDAY, 31 OCTOBER at 11 am and 2.30 pm, at New Bond Street

**Valuable Printed Books**

the property of His Grace the Duke of Sutherland, T.D., D.L., The Leys School, Cambridge, and other properties comprising English literature of the 16th to the 19th century, including *Christiani hominis institutio*, 1544, in a contemporary London blind-stamped binding, *The Book of Common Prayer*, 1549, in a contemporary binding with the arms of Edward VI, Leigh's *The accidence of armory*, 1562, with annotations by the Rev. Walker Stonehouse, More's *The workes*, 1557, Shakespeare's *Comedies, Histories and Tragedies*, 1685, the fourth folio edition, Adam Smith's *The wealth of nations*, 1776, and an interesting collection of the literary works of Benjamin Disraeli; Continental books, including Boniface VIII's *Liber sextus decretalium*, 1473, Justinian's *Institutiones, c.* 1478, Petrus de Ancharano's *Catalogus Sanctorum . . .* 1493, and Pindar's *Olympia, [etc]*, 1595, bound by Nicolò Franzese for Giovanni Battista Grimaldi; colour-plate and illustrated books, including Ackermann's *History of the University of Oxford*, 1814, Apperley's *The life of a sportsman*, 1847, Bidgood's *Travels through Denmark and Sweden*, 1810, Harraden's *Cantabrigia Depicta*, 1809, extra-illustrated and bound by Hering, and Parkinson's *Voyage to the South Seas*, 1773, a large paper copy; Chinese drawings on rice-paper.
*Catalogue Price 60p*

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APPLICATIONS are invited from suitably qualified persons with substantial library experience. The appointee will be responsible for the accessions and cataloguing work of the library. Duties commence 1st January, 1978, or soon thereafter. Salary under Grade III of the national scales for senior library staff (£3,435-£4,485, under review).
Applications, including full curriculum vitae and the names of two referees, not later than 31st October, 1977, to the Staff Officer, Heriot-Watt University, Chambers Street, Edinburgh EH1 1HX, from whom further particulars may be obtained.

**QUEEN ELIZABETH COLLEGE**
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
APPLICATIONS are invited for the following POST in the College Library
SENIOR LIBRARY ASSISTANT to assist in the day to day running of the Periodicals Library and to assist the Acquisitions Librarian. Applicants should have passed Part II of the Library Association Examinations. Salary on Scale £2,785 to £3,325 including London Allowance.
Applications, giving age, educational details, relevant experience and the names of two referees to the Librarian, Queen Elizabeth College, Campden Hill Road, Kensington, London W8 7AH. Closing date 7 OCTOBER, 1977.

**TRINIDAD**
UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES
APPLICATIONS are invited for TWO POSTS of ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN/LIBRARIAN II in the Library:
(1) A university degree and professional qualification in Librarianship required. Experience in Acquisitions desirable.
(2) A university degree or higher degree in Natural Sciences or Engineering and a professional qualification in Librarianship/Information science required. Experience in Science or Engineering libraries and information services desirable. Knowledge of Spanish in librarianship or information services would be considered for appointment and suitable applicants may be placed on a panel of service.
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